



GOD AND MY BIRTHRIGHT

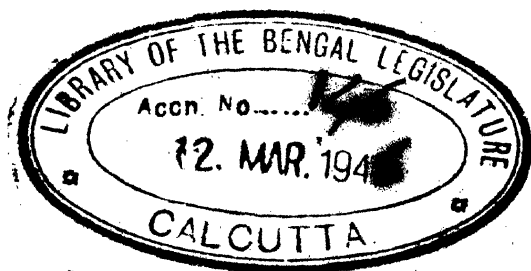
GOD AND MY BIRTHRIGHT

OR
THE FIFTH
WORLD WIDE EMPIRE

By
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PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

THIS book is the outcome of full notes prepared for lectures. The chapters deal with an important subject which should interest all English-speaking people.

The present amazing world position of the Anglo-Saxon Race, the British Empire and the United States of America, needs some explanation. It is no fortuitous development. These pages treat of its why and wherefore.

The writer confidently contends that there is only one all-sufficient and valid explanation, namely, that the Race is in very deed the lawful and actual inheritor of the stupendous BIRTHRIGHT BLESSINGS conferred on the House of Joseph as recorded in the Bible.

The motto of our Empire is *Dieu et mon Droit*, God and my Right ; not God and *the* Right, but God and *my* Right. What is this Right ? What Right has our Race save this great BIRTHRIGHT, of which the average Britisher is wholly unaware ?

What that BIRTHRIGHT is and involves, these pages feebly strive to tell. Of such import is it to our nation, that the novice writer fears lest he fail through lack of literary ability to do justice to a theme so fraught with living interest, or fail to engage the sympathy of the reader.

"Through the naked words and mean
May ye see the truth between."—*Kipling*.

The basis of the theme is the Word of God. It is a living word to-day ; a live message for the times. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the Anglo-Saxon is, in the providence of God, the age-long *elected* Race for the BLESSING and SERVICE of all mankind.

World Service is the destined rôle of the BIRTHRIGHT RACE. High indeed is the calling. World Service must ever be the concomitant of true World Dominion.

The Race to which is entrusted the Headship of the world

must play the rôle "I Serve," the motto of the heirs of our Imperial throne ; and right well have our late Princes trod this path of duty. The rejection of this rôle, it will be remembered, was the undoing of King Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. To him it was a stone of stumbling and rock of offence, and hence his failure. The advice given to that young king by "the old men that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived" is of abiding value. "If thou wilt be a *servant* unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words unto them, then will they be thy *servants* for ever." Even so must it be with the nation. The pathway, by precept and example, has been indicated for all time by the Redeemer of Israel. "Who-soever of you will be chiefest shall be *servant* of all," was the Divine prescription : "I am among you as he that *serveth*" was and still is the wondrous example and ideal for the individual and for the nation.

A fair and candid hearing is respectfully craved of the reader. An unprejudiced investigation of the subject will bring about a considerable reconstruction of some commonly accepted views, and give an entirely new and inspiring outlook on present-day world problems.

The topic is not new ; the reader has doubtless heard of it before. The Great War has turned the thoughts of many towards it.

The justification for publishing this book is that it presents the subject in a new way.

The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to many authors for much teaching regarding it, amongst whom should be named the late Dr. H. Aldersmith, M.B., F.R.C.S., A. Douglas Onslow, Esq., J.P., and the Rev. J. H. Allen.

An earnest study of the writings in opposition to these views has greatly strengthened the writer's belief in this truth.

To his friends Dr. S. T. Pruett, M.D., and T. A. Wylie, Esq., is he much beholden for valuable help and criticism in the preparation of these pages.

Barnet,

September, 1919.

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

THIS book was first written during the Great War, mostly in 1915-16, when the author was medical superintendent of a small hospital in London. On several occasions the pen had to be laid down because the air raid warning had been given. It was first published in 1920. Since that time the great developments in world history have in no way shaken the main argument of the volume, but rather strengthened it.

A second edition came out in 1926 after a minor revision. This now, 1938, being sold out, a third edition is called for. Beyond the usual minor corrections and additions effected, the opportunity has been taken of giving what is believed to be a more correct version of the "Captivity of Israel" in Chapter IX, which, while not the generally accepted view, is in closer accord with prior prophetic utterances on the subject.

A second alteration is the re-statement on "The Seven Times Punishment."

Both these topics have recently been dealt with respectively in a pamphlet entitled *The Assyrian Invasions and Deportations of Israel*, and in the small book, *The Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants*; hence the arguments are not repeated here.

These changes have involved the addition and the redrawing of tables. The title of the first chapter has been altered.

An attempt has been made in this edition to write ISRAEL, in capital letters, when the reference is to any or all the Twelve Tribes, and Israel, in small letters, when the reference is only to the Ten Tribes.

In other respects the book is practically unchanged.

September, 1938.

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CHAPTER I

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

CONTENTS

WHO ARE THE JEWS ?

What Tribes returned to Palestine under the Edict of Cyrus ?

The Jews : of which Tribes are they composed ?

The term "Jew" and "Jews."

The term "Israel."

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CHAPTER I

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

BEFORE examining the subject of the possibility of the nations of the British race being the literal descendants of the house of Joseph, the heir to the stupendous Abrahamic Covenant Promises, it is necessary to clear the ground of certain misconceptions. Of these perhaps the most important is the position of the Jews.

The Jews at the present time are the *only* generally recognized descendants of the "Covenant Race" of Abraham.

Serious attention should be paid to the fact that the unanimous verdict of learned Jewry is that *the Jewish people do not constitute the whole of the "Covenanted Race,"* but that they are only the remnant of the people of the ancient kingdom of Judah, and that they are not any part of the Ten Tribed kingdom of Israel.

This being so, it is perhaps not altogether remarkable that there is spreading amongst the Jews to-day a strong suspicion that the Anglo-Saxon nations may indeed be the other and larger section of the "Covenant Race," that section which was never Jewish, and which was never called Jews in the Scriptures. The Anglo-Saxon people are certainly not Jews.

Who then are the Jews? Of what Tribes are they composed? Do they represent the Twelve Tribes? Or, in other words, Did the Twelve Tribes return to Palestine after the Babylonian captivity? or did only the house of Judah so return without their brethren of the house of Israel? The answer is vital to a right understanding of many prophecies. Doubt or ignorance on this point is to miss the meaning of God's Word. It makes all the difference in the world whether the Twelve Tribes are included in the Jewish people or not.

The commonly accepted view is that the Jews of to-day do represent all the Twelve Tribes. Surely it is most important to be very positive on this point. If the common view be wrong it is evident that the application of prophecies must be more or less erroneous and must lead to disastrous confusion. Yet few take the trouble to investigate the matter. It should be possible to be absolutely certain about it.

In examining the subject we have :

1. The direct evidence of Scripture, especially in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, as to those who did return.
2. The evidence of the Apocrypha on the subject.
3. The evidence of the historian Josephus.
4. The evidence of the Post-Exilic prophets.
5. The explicit prophecies, with sufficient detail of condition and circumstance, concerning the reunion of the two houses, which can be compared with those of the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, to make it possible to tell whether these prophecies were fulfilled in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

"JEW," "JEWS"

In making this investigation it is necessary to understand the terms "Jew" and "Jews," as found in the Old Testament. It is astonishing how loosely and incorrectly they are used both in and out of the pulpit. Clergy, ministers and teachers are very hazy as to the meaning and limitation of the terms.

The patriarch Abraham was a Hebrew. He was not an Israelite, he was not a Jew, though he was the progenitor of the Israelites and of the Jews. Exactly the same is the case with Isaac. Jacob was a Hebrew, he was not an Israelite, he was Israel, he was not a Jew. He was the father of the Israelites and the progenitor of the Jews. The twelve sons of Jacob were Hebrews and were ISRAELITES, but they were not Jews. In the same way Moses was not a Jew, he was an ISRAELITE. At the death of Solomon the Twelve Tribes were divided by God into the Northern and the Southern ISRAELITES, or more commonly and strictly known as Israel and Judah. The people of the northern

kingdom were not Jews, and are never once called Jews in the Bible. None of their kings were Jews, and their prophets Elijah and Elisha were not Jews. Even the people of the kingdom of Judah were never called Jews in the earlier part of their history! It was only towards the latter portion of the existence of the kingdom of Judah that the name Jews is applied to that people in the Bible.

The first mention of the term "Jews" is in 2 Kings xvi. In the reign of Pekah, the last king but one of Israel, we read that he allied himself with Resin, king of Syria, for the purpose of attacking Judah. Their object was to overthrow Ahaz, the king of the royal line of David, to destroy that line, and set up another dynasty over Judah. They had selected the son of Tabeal to be the new king (Isa. vii. 6-7). Needless to say that in this they utterly failed, otherwise the Covenant of Jehovah with David would have been broken. In this war we read in 2 Kings xvi. 6 :

"At that time Resin, king of Syria, recovered Elath to Syria, and drave *the Jews* from Elath; and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day."

Note that in this war Israelites of the northern kingdom were fighting against the southern kingdom of Judah. That is not the same as Jews fighting against Jews, but it was *Israel* fighting against *Jews*. The distinction is very clear. The kingdom of Israel was never Jewish.

The term next occurs in the reign of Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz (2 Kings xviii. 26-28) when Rabshakeh stood before the walls of Jerusalem and made his boastful speech to "the people that are on the wall." This was early in Hezekiah's reign, and shortly after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C.

Therefore, to speak of the exodus from Egypt as "the exodus of *the Jews*," or of the forty years in the desert as "the wandering of *the Jews*" is incorrect. One might as justly speak of it as the exodus or wanderings of the Levites. All Jews and Levites were ISRAELITES, but all ISRAELITES were not Jews or Levites. Every Englishman is a Briton,

but all the British are not Englishmen as the Scots and Welsh will emphatically declare.

Jew means a Judahite, and was the name given to the people of the kingdom of Judah, which consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and the Levites. The Jews were distinct and quite separate from the Israelites of the northern kingdom. The people of the two kingdoms were Hebrews, and were ISRAELITES, but only the southern people were Jews.

THE TERM "ISRAEL"

A word needs to be said on the term "Israel." Let us be clear in our minds as to what is meant thereby.

First.—Israel was the name of the patriarch Jacob. He was the man, Israel.

Second.—It was the name given to all the sons of Jacob, to the Twelve Tribes, to the complete race. It embraced the two houses of ISRAEL : viz., the house of Israel of the Ten Tribes and the house of Judah of the Two Tribes. This is the widest use of the term.

Third.—It was the name specially applied to the northern kingdom, after the rending of the one nation into the two kingdoms of "Israel" and "Judah," or "All-Israel" and "Judah." Here the term is used in its limited and restricted sense, and referred only to the northern realm in contradistinction to the kingdom of Judah.

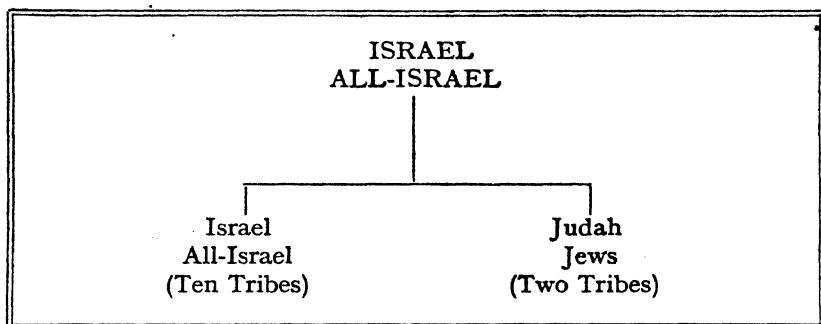
The house of Judah belongs to "ISRAEL" of the larger term, and may rightly be spoken of as ISRAEL, and is so named in certain passages, but it is entirely excluded from Israel of the restricted term. This point should be borne in mind when reading the New Testament.

It is easy to see how confusion may arise over the expression "Israel" in the Bible. It is necessary to determine in which sense it is used in any particular passage, whether it means :

1. The whole of the Twelve Tribes ;
2. The house of Judah alone as being an integral part of the Twelve ; or
3. The Ten-Tribed Kingdom, in its technical and restricted sense.

The subjoined Table No. I should make the point clear. Let the words ISRAEL and ISRAELITES, in capital letters, be used to signify the whole or a part of the whole Twelve Tribes. When ISRAEL was divided into the two kingdoms, the larger section, the Ten, took the name of the whole and was called Israel, written in small letters to indicate the Ten. Thus :

TABLE No. I
ISRAEL=ISRAEL AND JUDAH



It is clear that both Israel and Judah are ISRAELITES. It is equally clear that Judah, the Jews, are not Israelites. Israel and the Jews, though both ISRAELITES, were distinct peoples.

There are some who maintain that while the distinction is marked in the Old Testament, it is entirely lost in the New Testament. The fact that St. Paul on one occasion called himself "a Jew,"* and on another declared that he was an "Israelite,"† is adduced as proof that Jew and Israelite are identical and interchangeable terms, showing that there is no difference between them. But this is no proof : St. Paul was a Jew, and being a Jew was an ISRAELITE, but he was not an Israelite, because he was not of the Ten Tribes.

To state that after the division of the nation into the two kingdoms, the term "Israel" always meant the Ten Tribes is incorrect and cannot be maintained, and to limit it thus exclusively is not fair. It would have simplified matters if the northern people had been called "Ephraim-Israel" and

* Acts xxii. 39.

† 2 Cor. xi. 29.

the southern "Judah-Israel." Had they been so named in the Scriptures, and if the word "Israel" had been reserved only for the Twelve Tribes, all possibility of confusion would have vanished. But now, as it stands, the exact meaning of the word "Israel" has to be determined, ISRAEL or Israel. In the great majority of instances it is easy from the context to know which is intended, but there are certain passages in which it is not easy to be dogmatic.

The expression "All-Israel" is generally confined to Ephraim-Israel to the exclusion of Judah-Israel. This is the general rule, but there are exceptions, thus in the Book of Judges it always embraces the Twelve Tribes, ALL ISRAEL. In the Books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles it is almost entirely confined to the Ten Tribes, while on two or three occasions it is applied to Judah-Israel, since they were of ALL ISRAEL.

The present day Jews are the descendants of the people of the kingdom of Judah, who were carried away into captivity. *Firstly*, some 200,000 Jews, who, in the reign of Hezekiah, were deported by Sennacherib into Assyria, ten years after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. *Secondly*, all those whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon in his three invasions of Judah between B.C. 606 and 587, which ended in the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Some of these Jews returned to Judea under Ezra and Nehemiah, and became the Palestinian Jews ; but the great majority never returned, and these were the Jews of the Dispersion. They however were quite distinct from the captives of Israel.

MOVEMENTS OF ISRAEL INTO JUDAH

Those who hold that the present-day Jews represent the whole of the Twelve Tribes, maintain that Israelites in large numbers continually migrated into Judah, and settled there in sufficient numbers to constitute the kingdom of Judah as representative of the Twelve Tribes. The Scripture proofs for this contention need careful scrutiny.

The first migration is said to have occurred when Jeroboam set up the worship of the Golden Calves at Dan and Bethel ;

that in addition to the Levites, who were thrown out of service by the introduction of the new worship, many Israelites of the other tribes migrated into Judah (2 Chron. xi. 16).

"And after them out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years ; *for three years* they walked in the way of David and Solomon."

There is no suggestion here that these people migrated into Judah. It is clearly stated that they went up to Jerusalem "*to sacrifice*" not to reside, nor yet to transfer their allegiance to Rehoboam. But however that may have been, we are told that it only lasted "*three years.*" This verse will not support the theory of a large or a permanent defection of Israelites to the kingdom of Judah.

The second migration took place in the reign of King Asa during the great revival described in 2 Chron. xv. 9-15.

"And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them, out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon ; for they *fell to him out of Israel in abundance*, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him, so they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem. . . . And they offered unto the Lord. . . . And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul."

"*They fell to him in abundance.*" It is evident that these Israelites came up for religious services and for worship, and for that in great numbers. When all was over did they not return back to their own possessions again ? There is no suggestion here that this "abundance" of Israelites transferred themselves to the rule and kingdom of Judah. There is no hint that they had left their homes and lands to permanently reside in the southern kingdom.

The third migration is supposed to have taken place in the reign of Hezekiah. The account of it is found in 2 Chron. xxxi. 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 18, 25. This king of Judah sent invitations to the people of the northern kingdom to come and keep the Passover feast at Jerusalem. This was held in the

first or second year of his reign, which was the fourth year of Hoshea, king of Israel. This was four or five years before invasion of Israel by Shalmaneser and the destruction of the Israel kingdom. The Israelites as a whole scornfully declined the invitation, but a multitude of them from at least five of the tribes responded and formed "the congregation that came out of Israel." These people did not, however, settle in Judah. After the festival was over they returned to the land of Israel, for we read in 2 Chron. xxxi. 1 :

"Then all the children of Israel returned every man to his possession, into their own cities."

There is indeed but little proof that Judah was largely inhabited by the other tribes of Israel.

That certain families did go and reside in the land of Judea will not be denied (see 1 Kings xii. 17). What is denied is that this took place in sufficient numbers to constitute the Jews as properly representative of the Twelve Tribes. The emigrants were a negligible and insignificant number of the population of Israel. Whatever the number may have been it had no effect on the fact that the kingdom of Israel continued a strong and powerful entity, and received those threatenings of dire punishment, and promises of ultimate restoration that God made exclusively to them by the mouth of His prophets. These pronouncements did not apply to Judah, nor yet to those Israelites who may have identified themselves with the fortunes of Judah.

To summarize : The kingdom of Judah was composed of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and most, if not all the Levites ; and there were with them some families from the other tribes. All these people became Jews.

The question then before us is whether the Jews who returned to Palestine after the edict of Cyrus were only those who were known as Jews before the captivity, or whether the term thenceforth included the other Ten Tribes as well. If all the Twelve Tribes did not return after the Babylonian captivity then the present Jews do not represent all the Twelve Tribes, and the other Ten Tribes must be in existence apart from the Jews to-day.

Before turning to definite proofs, there are four factors which make it highly improbable that the house of Israel returned to Palestine with the house of Judah at the restoration.

First.—When the two kingdoms existed side by side there was little love lost between them. They did not live on good terms with one another, there was intense rivalry between them. They were constantly at war ; hostility was a marked feature. Only during one period was there any alliance between these kingdoms, namely, in the days of Ahab's dynasty, when Jehosaphat, king of Judah, entered into alliance with Ahab by the marriage of his son with Ahab's daughter. This alliance lasted throughout the reigns of Jehosaphat, Jehoram and Ahaziah, kings of Judah. After that period there was again bitter war between them, each side calling in foreign powers to help it against the other.

It would have been surprising if the people of the northern kingdom, some one hundred and fifty years after their having been carried into captivity, desired to join the Jews on their return from their Babylonian captivity. Did their captivity soften their old-time hostility or rivalry ? The feeling of animosity, it seems, still continued in their captivity. The attitude of the Jews towards Israel is given thus in Ezekiel xi. 15.

"Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the Jews) have said, Get you far from the Lord ; unto us is this land given in possession."

Second.—In the second place, the main transportation of Israel into Assyria took place about 676 B.C., some ninety years before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and about a hundred and fifty years before the Jews returned to Palestine. This is a long period. Is it likely that after so long a time the descendants of the Israelites would wish to return and rejoin the Jews ?

Third.—It should also be remembered that not only did the two captivities take place at dates far removed from one another, but that the two peoples were carried captive

Only the tribes that formed the southern kingdom are named.

4. In Ezra v. 11-12, we find that those who returned, when speaking to their foes, thus described themselves :

"But after that *our fathers* had provoked the God of the heaven unto wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon."

These state clearly that their fathers were those who had been taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar. They were the descendants of the captives of Judah. They could not have been Israelites of the northern kingdom.

5. In Ezra viii., we have a further enumeration of those who returned, and in verse 1 we are told that they went up "from Babylon in the reign of Artaxerxes." They then were not the captives in Assyria, unless it can be shown that such had previously joined Judah in their captivity in Babylon.

6. In Ezra x. 9, again the same two tribes only are cited :

"Then all the men of *Judah and Benjamin* gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days."

Not once in the Book of Ezra is any tribe of the kingdom of Israel mentioned or listed. The matter is very clear. One verse calls for notice : All who returned to Judea were registered under their father's house, and therefore were able to state to which tribe they belonged. But there were a certain number who could not show their pedigree (Ezra ii. 59).

"... they could not show their father's house, and their seed, whether they were of Israel."

Does this mean that they really were, but could not prove to being members of the Ten-Tribed people ; or that they could not show from whom they were descended ?

In the Book of Nehemiah exactly the same thing is found. None of the Ten Tribes are mentioned, only Judah and Benjamin and the Levites are named.

The evidence of these two writers is overwhelming as to which tribes did return.

EVIDENCE OF THE APOCRYPHA

The *History* of the Kingdom of Israel, the northern kingdom, ends in the Scriptures in these words (2 Kings xvii. 18).

"Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only."

The word "tribe" of Judah, it is said, should read "house" of Judah only. The kingdom of Judah (of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin with the Levites) continued to exist for at least ninety years after the removal of Israel. Nothing more whatever is told us of Israel after this. Their *History* in the Bible absolutely ends here. *Prophecy*, on the other hand, has much to say of their future. The Apocrypha, however, carries their *History* a little farther, and tells of what happened to them and of their great movement. The Book of Esdras tells us (2 Esdras xiii. 40) that a great number of these captives of Israel migrated to Ar-Sareth, a region in the south of Russia north-west of Assyria. This migration took place about 650 B.C., which was after the main deportation by Esar Haddon in 676 B.C. Let it be noted that it commenced before the destruction of Jerusalem and carrying away of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar! Israel had started on their migration out of the land of their captivity into the south-east of Europe before Judah ceased to exist as a kingdom. Note that when the Jews returned the main body of the Israelites were in Ar-Sareth, over a thousand miles from Babylon. And yet some say that they "must have" come back with the Jews. This migration into Europe took place at the time when the great Assyrian Empire was in upheaval. Israel seized the favourable opportunity of escaping into Europe. Here is the passage from Esdras:

"Those are the Ten Tribes which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea the king, whom Salmanasar, the king of Assyria, led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land."

"But they took this counsel among themselves that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt.

"That they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land.

"And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. For the most High there showed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over. For through that country was a great way to go, namely of a year and a half, and the same region is called Ar-Sareth.

"Then dwell they there until the latter time.

"And now when they shall begin to come the Highest shall stay the springs of the stream again that they may go through."

This surely is a most important item in the history of Israel. It is very clear from this that they did not return to Palestine with the Jews, but that about a century before the restoration of the Jews the main body of Israel had passed out of Asia into Europe ! We are definitely informed that at the period of the return of the Jews the Israelites were not with them.

Jerome

It has been pointed out that Jerome, writing in the fourth century, stated that the Ten Tribes in his time were in the places where they were carried captive. "Unto this day the Ten Tribes are subject to the kings of the Persians, nor has their captivity ever been loosed" (tom. vi. p. 7), and again : "The Ten Tribes inhabit at this day the cities and mountains of the Medes" (tom. vi. p. 80).

From this it is evident that Jerome knew that Israel had not returned with the Jews to Palestine, but that they were separate from them. So far so good. As to the accuracy of his statement that they were in his day still in the cities of the Medes the reader must decide between the statements of Esdras and of Jerome. Why should not both be right ? The main body of the captives passing into Europe and a large portion remaining in Media ?

EVIDENCE OF THE POST-EXILIC PROPHETS

Long after the return of the Jews to Palestine we find reference to Israel as being separate from Judah (Zech. x. 6) :

“And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them ; for I have mercy upon them ; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off ; for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them.”

This was written some eighteen years after the return of the Jews to the land. If they were composed of the Twelve Tribes, it is strange that their division into the two houses is still maintained, after they had become one nation. In the mind of God they are not one people, but still distinctly two. Judah is to be *strengthened* and Joseph is to be *saved*. The next sentence is, “and I will bring them again to place them.” To whom does this refer, to both houses or only to that of Joseph ? There is no question that God had brought the house of Judah back and had placed them in the land, the words can hardly refer to them, they apply solely to the house of Joseph, and are a prophecy that they shall yet be brought and placed some day. The house of Judah had not been “cast off” by God as the house of Joseph had been. Israel had been disowned (Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi (Hosea i. 6 and 9)), but Judah had received mercy and were re-established in her possessions. The house of Joseph comprised “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” whereas the house of Judah had never been lost in all its long history.

Whatever view is taken of the interpretation of this passage, there can be no ambiguity whatever in the two verses that follow it. In them God speaks not of Judah, but of the house of Israel under the name of “Ephraim,” a name that is very frequently used to designate the northern kingdom of Israel (Zech. x. 7, 8 and 9).

“And they of *Ephraim* shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine : yea, their children shall see it, and be glad ; their heart shall rejoice in the Lord.

“I will hiss for them, and gather them ; for I have redeemed them ; and they shall increase as they have increased.

“And I will sow them among the people ; and they shall remember Me in far countries ; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.”

It is not conceivable that God should thus speak if Israel had already returned and were with the Jews in Palestine. This people are spoken of as being in “far countries,” countries,

that is, remote from Palestine. God is going to "hiss for them and gather them." They were, therefore, not gathered at the time of speaking as were their brethren the Jews. They are to be "redeemed," to "remember" God in the far-off lands, to "rejoice in the Lord" and to "turn again." This implies their re-betrothal to God, to being brought under "the bond of the Covenant." They are to increase in numbers and thus enjoy the blessing of multiplicity, which was the dominant feature of Joseph's Birthright, and thus enter into the blessing promised to Ephraim of being the Fulness of the Gentiles (Gen. xlviii. 19). They were to be sown among the people, not in the sense of punitive and shameful scattering, but, on the contrary, in honour spreading abroad "to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south," as foretold to Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 14).

THE EVIDENCE OF THE HISTORIAN

There is yet another source of information that throws light on our subject. There are the writings of Josephus, who lived at the time of the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Josephus is said not to be a reliable authority on all the questions he treats. He is certainly known to have exaggerated in the matter of figures, but his main evidence is fully accepted. He tells us who returned to Palestine, and definitely states that they were "of Judah and Benjamin" and also "the Levites." And then he remarks :

"Of those who said they were *Israelites*, but were not able to show their genealogies, six hundred and sixty-two."

If these were indeed people of the northern kingdom it could hardly be said that they sufficiently represented the house of Israel of the Ten-Tribed kingdom. Josephus is quite clear as to the tribes who returned. He certainly confirms the testimony of Ezra and Nehemiah.

In another place he makes the following very important statement :

"The Ten Tribes did not return to Palestine ; only Two Tribes served the Romans after Palestine became a Roman province."

This is clear enough, "the Ten Tribes did not return." He further declares :

"So Ezra read the Epistles of Xerxes at *Babylon to those Jews that were there*. . . . Many of them took their effects with them and came to Jerusalem, but then the entire body of the people of Israel remained in that country, wherefore there are but *Two Tribes* in Asia and Europe subject to the Roman, while the Ten Tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude."

The evidence of Josephus is very emphatic that in his day the Jews did not consist of the Twelve Tribes, but that they only represented those of the kingdom of Judah. Note that he speaks of Europe.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE REUNION OF THE TWO HOUSES

Let it be firmly grasped that the division into the two kingdoms was the act of God. "I will rend," "This thing is of Me" are God's statements.

Not only did God bring about the division, but He interposed to maintain it. He interfered with and stopped the efforts of Rehoboam to reunite the two kingdoms. Surely there must have been some far reaching, wise and beneficent purpose in it all.

There are many who hold that the reunion took place in Ezra's day. Just think it out. How quietly it was done, how unostentatiously carried out, what was God's purpose in it all if they did at that time reunite? What a poor, miserable reunion !

If, however, we study what is prophesied in the Scriptures about the circumstances and conditions of the great coming together of the two houses, we realize that it was to be no insignificant affair. We are told how it was to be brought about. It was described in detail. The conditions and circumstances under which it was to take place were given. It ought, therefore, to be easy to determine whether these particulars were fulfilled. If investigation shows that they did not obtain when the Jews returned, we may be positive that the reunion did not take place then.

1. Hosea

"Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come out of the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel" (Hos. i. 11.)

Did the Jews appoint a ruler over themselves? Zerubabel might possibly answer the question.

In the preceding verse we have a description of the children of Israel before they were to join Judah, verse 10.

"Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered: and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall it be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."

In this passage we have two clear marks: first, Multiplicity, and second, Sons of the living God: this latter expression meaning that they who had been uncovenanted, divorced and cast off, were to be brought again into covenant with God, into the New Covenant with God in Christ Jesus; that is, as a Christian people. Israel before they reunite with the Jews are to be a Christian nation.

Then take the mark of multitudinousness; after allowing for hyperbole, etc., can we, by any stretch of the imagination, state that the Israelites (if any), who returned with the Jews at the restoration from Babylon, were a great multitude? We have already noted that all who returned only numbered 42,360! The fulfilment hardly fits the prophecy. These terms were not fulfilled when the captivity returned under the edict of Cyrus. Therefore, the reunion of Israel and Judah could not have taken place and yet awaits its glorious consummation in the future.

2. Jeremiah

"In those days the house of Judah shall walk with (or more correctly, 'to') the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jer. iii. 18).

Did this take place upon the edict of Cyrus? The house of Judah did not walk to the house of Israel at that time.

(See the emphatic and interesting note in the *Speaker's Commentary* on this verse.)

Again Jeremiah refers to the reunion thus :

"And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them as at the first" (Jer. xxxiii. 7-18).

Did they return to their old possessions ? Did they get back into the land of Samaria at all ? That was a very large section of the old kingdom of Israel. We know that they never reoccupied this section of Palestine. They certainly, therefore, were not built "as at the first." The whole chapter should be read. A descendant of David was to reign over them. This certainly did not take place, for they had no king on their return from Babylon.

Verses 17, 20-26, etc., must be noted. It will be seen that the conditions there depicted were not fulfilled at the time of the return of the Jews. Hence the reunion cannot have taken place at that time.

3. Ezekiel

Take the graphic description given by Ezekiel in xxxvii. 15-28. It tells of the two sticks, one representing the house of Joseph and his companions (the kingdom of Israel, the Ten Tribes) and the other representing the house of Judah and his companions (the kingdom of Judah). These were to be joined into one single stick, symbolizing the reunion.

"And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel : and one king shall be king to them all : and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into kingdoms any more at all. . . ." (Verse 22.)

"And David My servant shall be king over them and they shall have one shepherd. . . ." (Verse 24.)

"And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt ; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children and their children's children *for ever* ; and My servant David shall be their prince for ever." (Verse 25.)

Did all this take place after Babylon ? One writer actually says that this is an accomplished event ! Had they any king on their return ? Had they a king either named David or of David's line ?

Did they abide in the land "for ever?" The prophet tells us that after the reunion and restoration they are to be in perpetual occupation of the land. The Jews were certainly driven out in A.D. 70. It is clear therefore that this great event did not take place, and that Israel could not have gone back.

4. Amos

Here is what Amos, who was a prophet to the Ten-Tribed kingdom, says on this subject :

"And I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them ; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof ; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and *they shall no more be pulled up out of their land*, which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God" (Amos. ix. 14-15).

We have already noted that they certainly did not inhabit the large section of their own land known as Samaria. If they did return they were most certainly "pulled up out of their land," for they were expelled by the Romans in the first century. Was God's word broken then? The only answer can be that God did not plant Israel in their land when He restored the Jews to their own cities. The reunion and the placing of Israel back in Palestine did not then take place.

To sum up, when Israel returned :

1. They were to be a countless number.
2. They were to be the "sons of the living God."
3. They were to multiply exceedingly in the land.
4. They were to dwell in the land "for ever."
5. They were not to be pulled up out of it again.
6. They were to have a king over them. (A David, or of David's line.)

The facts, conditions, and the mode of the restoration of the Jews after Babylon in no way tally with the prophecies concerning the reunion and restoration of the two kingdoms. These prophecies cannot be applied to the return of the

Jews after the Babylonian captivity. The Jews are still separate from Israel.

One more point is to be noticed. Is there any indication in the earlier Scriptures of any great separation between Judah and the other tribes? Certainly there is. It is found in the utterance of Moses when he blessed the Twelve Tribes before his death.

In Deuteronomy xxxiii. 1-7 :

"And this is the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. . . .

"And this is the blessing of Judah : and he said : Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah and bring him unto his people : let his hands be sufficient for him ; and be Thou an help to him from his enemies."

These are remarkable words. God is asked to hear the voice of Judah ; obviously the voice is a cry of distress, for he is in oppression from enemies. This points to special distress for Judah in the latter days. Anyhow it is a fact that in these latter days Judah has been a persecuted and downtrodden people. Ever since they crucified their Messiah the wrath of God has come upon them to the uttermost. Then the words "bring him unto his people," what do they mean? Surely that Judah is in separation from the rest of the tribes, and the prayer of Moses is that God would hear their cry and hasten the glorious day of their reunion with their people of the other tribes. These words were a prophetic utterance of the separation of Judah (the Jews) from their brethren of Israel.

THE UNANIMOUS VERDICT OF JEWRY

What more proof is needed? But this misconception is deeply rooted in the minds of most people, and its eradication is no easy matter, because so destructive of old conceptions.

What is the witness of the Jews themselves on this question? They above all people should know, and their testimony should be final.

The statements of Jewish historians, of the Jewish Encyclopædia, of learned writers, and Chief Rabbis with one

accord maintain that the present-day Jews do not represent the Twelve Tribes of ISRAEL.

The late Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Church in England, Dr. Adler, asserted this fact ; his successor, Dr. Hertz, the present Chief Rabbi, writing on this question, stated : "The people known as the Jews are the descendants of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with a certain number of descendants of the tribe of Levi. So far as is known there is not any further admixture of other tribes. The ten tribes have been absorbed among the nations of the world. See 2 Kings xvii., more especially verses 22 and 23. The Jews look forward to the gathering of all the tribes at some future day. "See Isa. xxvii. 12, 13, and Ezekiel xxxvii. 15-22."

This surely is decisive ; otherwise why do the Jews pray every week in their synagogues for the restoration of their lost brethren ?

In the face of all this evidence is it not foolish, if not worse, of Christians to cling to the fallacy that the Jews represent the whole of the Twelve Tribes of ISRAEL ?

The evidence of the Scriptures and of history is overwhelming. There is not a particle of evidence to show that the Jews of to-day are other than the house of Judah, or that they represent the Twelve Tribes. The evidence is clear that Israel did not rejoin the Jews.

This being so, the Ten-Tribed kingdom must be somewhere, enjoying the wonderful promises made to it in the Scriptures. To quote Dr. Neubauer in the *Jewish Chronicle*, "If, as you Christians say, the Christ has come, then the house of Joseph ought to be manifest, and what you have got to do is to find the people who represent them."

CHAPTER II

THE PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS

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THE PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS.

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CHAPTER II

THE PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS

THE Covenant Promises made by God to Abraham, which were confirmed to Isaac and to Jacob, and which were passed on to the Twelve Tribes of Israel, form the prophetic summary of the History of the World as God viewed it, and as He has decreed it should be.

The realization of this fact is important to the right understanding of the Scriptures, for here we have the groundwork of all that follows: the foundation of the subsequent superstructure. *All other world history is subordinate and subservient to this one great plan.*

In these Promises we are given in plain words or by symbol God's scheme for the earth right down the centuries of time to the millennial era. They contain the condensed history of the ages. In broadest outline we read God's great plan of blessing for the whole human family through the chosen race, His plan for the salvation and restoration of fallen man. This is the theme of all subsequent Scripture, which is but the unfolding of this gracious purpose and the evolution of these promises.

They tell of the blessing of mankind through the coming SEED, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the blessing that is to come to the nations through the instrumentality of this chosen people of the seed of Abraham.

The whole Bible, historic and prophetic, deals with the ONE SEED and the chosen race of Abraham. It tells what God will do for the peoples of the earth through them.

The Covenant of Promises are found in the Book of Genesis from chapter xii to the end of the book. These form the theme of our present study.

God chose one man, and heaped upon him blessings of surpassing magnitude, the full import of which many fail to

recognize. These blessings were to descend upon Abraham's seed by his wife Sarah. They were not for the self-aggrandizement of the man or of his seed, but simply and solely that they in turn should be a blessing to the world at large. "I will bless thee and thou shalt be a blessing" was God's word, and this was to be as true of the race as it was of the patriarch. It was the election for the service of God in the blessing of mankind. This is the dominant feature of God's great purpose. To miss this is to miss all.

A GREAT FORECAST

The Covenant Promises are a great forecast of the future. In them there is discerned:

1. The explanation of the Multiplicity of Abraham's seed in these latter days.
2. The earliest intimation of the expansion of their Territories.
3. The indication of their phenomenal Colonial enterprise.
4. The first glimpse of their Maritime supremacy.
5. The bright vision of their boundless Commerce and Wealth.
6. The forecast of their great Military prowess and Invincibility.
7. The ground plan of their future National Groupings.
8. The national Characteristics of their Government and Rule.

THE FOUR GREAT COVENANTS WITH ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED

God made four covenants with Abraham and his children:

1. The Abrahamic.
2. The Mosaic, the Law given at Sinai.
3. The Davidic, concerning his kingdom, throne and seed.
4. The new Covenant in Christ Jesus.

The first of these, which is our present study, was wholly an *unconditional* one.

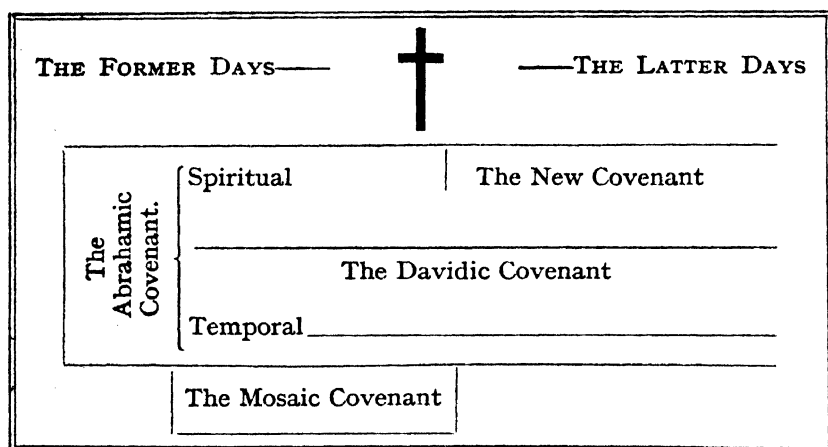
The second was *conditional* on obedience to the Law which was given at Sinai.

The third was *unconditional*.

The fourth was and is *conditional* on repentance and faith.

The Mosaic Covenant, which in no way altered or affected the Abrahamic, was done away in Christ Jesus by the bringing in of the New and Better Covenant which God before had promised to make "with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." This was the consummation of the Covenant made with Abraham and his seed. It was the ratification of God's promises to His friend, the father of the faithful. The Abrahamic Covenant was not done away in Christ, on the contrary, Christ came "to confirm the promises made to the fathers" (Rom. xv. 8). The distinction between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants is fundamental, and of the utmost importance in the right understanding of divine revelation.

TABLE No. IV
THE FOUR COVENANTS



See Larger Table No. V.

SIX POINTS ABOUT THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

A study of the terms of the Covenant with Abraham reveals certain clear facts :

1. That God elected a certain race apart from all others to do Him special service.
2. That the Covenant was absolutely Unconditional.
3. That it contained blessings both Spiritual and Temporal.
4. That it was an Everlasting Covenant, which admitted of no suspension, pause or parenthesis.

5. That the Age for the full development and realization was clearly indicated.

6. That the Promises were to his posterity in a certain and definite line to the exclusion of other natural heirs.

Before actually examining the various items in the promises these six points should be made clear.

1. The Election of a Race

In these Covenant Promises there are Election and Predestination. These terms have formed a topic of fierce contention in the past. What perplexity they have caused to many earnest minds ! What evil things have been written and said on this subject ! Is this not all due to the fact that men failed to recognize that there are two elections in the Scriptures ? There is the "Election of Grace" and there is the "Election of Race." These are utterly different propositions.

The Election of Grace refers to the salvation of the soul of man and deals with eternal life.

The Election of Race deals purely with a particular race of men, and is distinct from the salvation of the soul, being entirely a national question.

The Election of Grace is wide and open to all, free to every individual of the human family. It takes no cognizance of race or sex or social conditions, being entirely a personal and individual question.

The Election of Race is narrow, circumscribed, and limited in its application, and is strictly confined to the one people ; and its sphere is that of highest service in the cause of mankind. One may be a member of the Elect Race without being, alas, a partaker of the Election of Grace ; and conversely a partaker of Grace is not necessarily one of the Elect Race.

Not to recognize these two elections is to flounder in confusion. It is necessary when reading of "the elect" and "election" in the Bible to know which is intended.

In these Covenant Promises the Election of Race commences, and many are the references to it in Scripture.

St. Paul, in Romans xi. 28, brings out the two elections very clearly :

"As concerning the Gospel (the Election of Grace) they are enemies for your sakes ; but touching the Election (the Election of Race), they are beloved for the Fathers' sake."

Have we not in these Abrahamic Promises a solution of the problem ? Not an election, nor a predestination to salvation or to condemnation, but that of a race for God's special service to mankind : the wonderful selection of a certain people for the great purpose of establishing the earth in righteousness and justice. An election to the ministry of reconciling the world to God. The predestination of a race to be God's servants for the proclamation of the Saviour to the nations. To be a peculiar people to show forth His praise.

Whether we like it or not God has clearly made such an election ; and the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

To this great end this race is to be blessed and endowed with all that is necessary to carry out its appointed world destiny. No other people or nation in God's purpose is elected or predestined to do this supreme work. The temporal blessings of power, place and position are conferred on Abraham's seed that it may carry out its high and holy calling.

2. The Covenant Unconditional

The blessings given to Abraham were wholly unconditional. They were bestowed because of the obedience of faith that was in him. "Because thou hast done this thing . . . Because thou hast obeyed My voice" (Gen. xxii. 16 and 18) is God's own explanation. This was the basis of the Covenant. When God repeated it to Isaac, it was not for any faith or obedience or merit in him, but, as God said, "Because that Abraham obeyed My voice" (Gen. xxvi. 5). The blessings descend to the seed quite independently of merit on their part. The after conduct of the race cannot disannul God's bond, or make void His oath. His covenant with Abraham holds : "I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham." It is not a question of merit, but of covenant.

It must not be overlooked that these promises made to Abraham were confirmed by God whole and entire to Isaac, and again, whole and entire to Jacob ; but now a change is to be noted, for they were not given whole and entire to each of the twelve sons of Jacob. They were then broken up and were distributed very unequally amongst them. They did not all receive the same blessing. While all were blessed, certain specific portions of the great covenant were given only to certain of the twelve sons. This will engage our attention farther on. Just as the spiritual blessing is only for the spiritual seed, so surely are the temporal blessings only for the literal seed, the lineal descendants, and to them as God has severally distributed.

3. The Blessings Spiritual and Temporal

The blessings were twofold in character, Spiritual and Temporal. On the Spiritual side was the promise of the Christ, the ONE SEED, as explained to us by St. Paul (Gal. iii. 16), in and through Whom all the nations and all the families of the earth were to be blessed. The coming of Shiloh and the gathering of the people unto Him we believe refers to our Lord.

These spiritual blessings were not alone for the descendants of Abraham, but for every one who truly repents and believes, who has the like faith of Abraham. So that the patriarch indeed becomes the spiritual father of all them that believe (Rom. iv. 11). These form his spiritual seed. In the matter of salvation there is no difference, all must be saved in the one way, namely, through Christ. "In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female." There is no distinction in this matter of race, social condition or sex. Those of Abraham's race must be saved exactly in the same way as any one else of another nationality. To the self-satisfied Jews John the Baptist said, "Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father" (Luke iii. 8). This confers no salvation. It is no substitute for Repentance and Faith. The spiritual blessing transcends the temporal, for what shall it profit a man (or a nation) if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?

But this great Spiritual portion does not exhaust the blessings of the Everlasting Covenant. Surpassing great were the Temporal blessings included in it. These were conferred on the chosen race, the literal seed. They were not conferred on the Spiritual seed. For instance, any one who truly believes in the Saviour, becomes a partaker of the Spiritual blessing, but, unless he be of the literal seed of Abraham, he has no claim to the great Temporal blessings promised by God to His chosen people.

What happens when a Jew or other ISRAELITE becomes a Christian? A late writer makes the following astounding statements: "If believers in Christ, they are detached from the national Israel and consequently from the future temporal interests and destiny of the nation."

And again:

"All Israelites, therefore, who are truly converted, are detached from the nation and secure the higher calling of the Church."

Surely this is a great mistake, and is entirely due to the failure to realize the fundamental distinction between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants. When Jews or Israelites become Christians they pass out from the Old (Mosaic) into the New Covenant, but they are not detached from the nation, nor from the future temporal interests and destiny of the nation. They are indeed detached from the Old Covenant made at Sinai, the Mosaic or the Covenant of the Law. They are delivered from the curse of the Law, but they are not detached from the Abrahamic Covenant, they do not lose the Covenant Promises which were made four hundred and thirty years before the Mosaic Covenant. These stand from generation to generation. The Abrahamic Covenant was everlasting, the Mosaic Covenant was temporary. The Mosaic Covenant, as regards the ordinances of worship, was *done away* in Christ Jesus, but not so the Abrahamic. On the contrary, these Promises of it are, every one of them, confirmed (ratified) by Christ Jesus. He came to perform "the mercy promised to our forefather Abraham" by oath and by covenant. Our Blessed Lord ratifies and performs the temporal interests and the foretold destiny

of the nation. The believing ISRAELITE does not lose them, far from it, they are his inalienable birthright ; Christ is the surety for their fulfilment. The New Covenant is the consummation of the Abrahamic Covenant ; it was primarily made with and for the seed of Abraham (Jer. xxxi. 31 and 33). The Church of Christ is the Church of ISRAEL. The spiritual blessings of ISRAEL are open to individuals of every race who embrace ISRAEL'S Messiah. The Church of Christ is the Spiritual side of the Abrahamic Covenant Promises.

That God bestowed certain specified temporal blessings on one particular race is beyond all dispute. Let us not be guilty of despising or undervaluing what God has been pleased to confer. A hearty recognition of God's design is the only befitting attitude of a believer, and this the more so as he grasps the truth that our Saviour came "*to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers.*" We are liable in reading this verse to take the word as "promise," in the singular, whereas it is in the plural, "promises." Not merely one, but every one of them did the Son of God come to ratify.

We very rightly take to ourselves the one great spiritual promise concerning the Messiah. Many think that it alone concerns us, and that, if there be others indeed, they do not apply to us since we are Gentiles and the promises were solely for the seed of Abraham. We do this to our own loss. A careful study of these promises will reveal the wonderful fact that we of the Anglo-Saxon race are directly involved in them.

4. The Covenant Everlasting

We remarked above that the Covenant was everlasting, that it admitted of no suspension, pause or interruption. This is disputed by many who hold that it is now in abeyance ; that we live to-day in a "parenthesis" ; that God has suspended His original purpose ; that now is the time of "the Church," the gathering in of the elect (not realizing that Israel is the elect) ; that when the Church is taken away God will continue His original purpose, and will once more pick up the dropped threads of His dealings with the seed of

Abraham. This, surely, is not warranted by Scripture, but rather is in direct contradiction to the sacred word.

The Covenant was to be everlasting, it was to be continuous. It was to be perpetual from one generation to another without break or abeyance. How can there be any parenthesis in the face of the following words by Jehovah to Abraham :

"And I will establish My Covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee *in their generations* for an *everlasting* covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee"? (Gen. xvii. 7).

This should settle the question.

Again, speaking to Abraham concerning Isaac, God said, "I will establish My Covenant with him for an *everlasting* Covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. xvii. 19).

God's Covenant with the patriarchs must hold good to-day, for it was in these "latter days" that it was to receive its full realization.

In the Benedictus it is written (Luke i. 68) :

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel :
For He hath visited and redeemed His people.

"To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers
And to remember His Holy Covenant ; the oath which He sware
to our forefather Abraham that He would give us."

Verily God is performing His oath to-day. His word was, "I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham."

Failure to perceive how God has been literally working out His Covenant has created so many difficulties that it has necessitated the invention of the "parenthesis" theory, and the suggestion of a "temporary abeyance" of the Covenant to account for the apparent failure. There can, however, be no abeyance or alienation of these Covenant Promises.

5. The Age of Fulfilment

An important consideration of these Covenant Promises is the time of their fulfilment. Are we told in what period they are to materialize ? Was the full realization of them to be in Old Testament times or in later ages ? In the gospel times or in the millennial age ? Of this we may be sure, that

when promises of Spiritual and Temporal blessings are given together, they will be fulfilled together : the Spiritual will not be for one age and the Temporal for quite another. As we read God's declarations to Abraham we find no indication whatever as to the time. Neither to Isaac nor to Jacob is there any answer to our question. It is, however, clearly revealed at the last when the blessings were distributed by the aged Jacob to his twelve sons before his death. We read, "And Jacob called unto his sons and said, Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." Here is revealed to us the period, it is to be in "the last days" or latter days (Gen. xlix. 1). The two expressions are one and the same. In the Revised Version we have it as "in the latter days." This is an expression that occurs many times in the Scriptures and it is necessary to understand its exact meaning. Chapter xi deals with the subject of the "Latter Days." From the time when these promises were made to Abraham to the coming of Christ there were twenty centuries ; and to-day we are living in the twentieth century after Christ. We are about as far removed from the crucifixion of our Lord as Abraham was. The cross is the very centre of this long period of time, even as it is the central event of the world history. In the Scriptures this long period is divided into the "former days" and the "latter days." From Abraham's time to Christ were "the former days," and from Christ to the present day and on to the time of His second coming are "the latter days." The latter days then are those of the Christian or Gospel dispensation. Let it be grasped, therefore, that the promises could not be realized before the coming of Christ since the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. For this Covenant "was confirmed before of God in Christ" (Gal. iii. 17). They awaited their confirmation or ratification in Christ, the ONE SEED. The blessings Spiritual and Temporal were inaugurated by the coming of Him, Who was the long-promised "SEED of the woman" and the "ONE SEED" of Abraham. Well might our Blessed Lord say, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John viii. 56).

That the realization of the Abrahamic Covenant Promises was for the Latter Days, and not for Old Testament times, is no surmise. It is the teaching of the New Testament. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews explicitly declares this truth. We are told that the Old Testament saints, though embracing and holding fast the Promises, did not enjoy the realization of them :

"These all died in faith, *not having received the promises*, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

And again :

"And these all, having received a good report through faith *received not the promise* : God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Heb. xi. 39-40).

The flood gates of the Covenant were thrown open by Him. He loosed the binding seals and let the Blessings flow. It is therefore in these days in which we live that the chosen race should be enjoying the promises. The time for their realization and fulfilment has come.

Great indeed were the Blessings, Spiritual and Temporal, enjoyed in Old Testament days, but these were the direct outcome of promises under the Mosaic Covenant. But those of the Abrahamic Covenant were for the Latter Days, the New Covenant times, the age of the Christian dispensation.

6. The Covenant in a Particular Line

At the time when God manifested His gracious purposes to the patriarch, Abraham was childless. His nephew Lot who lived with him would probably have been his heir, but Lot separated himself from his uncle and thus lost any possibility of inheritance. He, as we know, became the progenitor of the two nations, Ammonites and Moabites.

A little later, when God repeated the promise, Abraham protested that he had no son, and that Eliezer of Damascus, his chief servant, was his heir. But God told him that this man was not to be his heir, but that he was to have a son of his own, who was to inherit the promises. Time passed and yet no son was born to him. Thereupon Sarah interfered to

bring about God's purpose. As she had borne no child, she gave Hagar, her Egyptian maid, to Abraham to wife. And in due time he had a son by her, Ishmael. Now at last Abraham had a son of his own; surely this was the heir. But God appeared to him and told him that Ishmael was not to be his heir. God blessed him abundantly but utterly eliminated him from the inheritance of the Covenant. It was then that God declared that Abraham's heir was to be a son by his wife Sarah. Ishmael was therefore sent away, and he became the progenitor of the Ishmaelites, the Arabs of the present day.

And now God had clearly stated His purpose that the Covenant heir was to be a son of Sarah, and that He would confirm the Covenant with him. In due course Isaac was born and the true heir to the promises arrived on the scene.

Isaac had two sons, twins, Esau and Jacob, and Esau, the first born, was naturally the heir. Before the birth of the boys, however, God had made a revelation to their mother regarding them (Gen. xxv. 23). "And the Lord said unto her,

"Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

Thus did God elect the younger and reject the elder, and Jacob was indicated as the Covenant heir. It is inconceivable that Isaac could have been ignorant of this revelation to his wife. These sons, as they grew up, knew well the marvellous promises conferred on their grandfather Abraham. For Abraham was alive during the boyhood of these lads. They must have learned from his lips the wondrous story of God's great Covenant Promises to him and his seed. Esau valued these but little, whereas Jacob was immensely impressed by their greatness and splendour, and desired them above all things. His mother had doubtless raised his confident hopes that they were indeed intended for him. In spite of all, however, Isaac held to his desire to make Esau the heir, and this, too, after he well knew that he had contemptuously disposed of his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage. It is evident that Isaac refused to recognize this transaction, and if he had had his way the birthright and blessing would

have gone to Esau. In fact, so determined was he, that he actually thought he was blessing Esau when all the time it was Jacob. He made him "lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee." By subtlety, and the connivance of his mother, Jacob secured the blessing, and Esau was rejected from the Covenant line even as Ishmael had been. Esau became the progenitor of the Edomites, who are considered to represent the Turks of later times. Isaac now fully recognized Jacob's right as the Covenant heir. His word concerning him to the disappointed Esau was, "I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed." Moreover, when, shortly after this, he sent Jacob away to Padan-Aram he formally bestowed upon him the Birthright Blessing in the following words (Gen. xxviii. 3) :

"And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people ; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee ; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham."

So far we have noted the election of Isaac and the rejection of Ishmael ; also the election of Jacob and the rejection of Esau. This was not an Election of Grace. It did not mean an arbitrary rejection of Ishmael and Esau from the Grace of God. It was purely and simply a national election, an Election of Race. Both Ishmael and Esau were abundantly blessed of God, but they were eliminated and set aside from the inheritance of the Promises. They were not "the Children of the Promise." True they were of Abraham's seed, but only after the flesh, "the Children of the Flesh." Isaac and Jacob were more than children of the flesh, they were "the Children of Promise." The writer of Hebrews vi. 17, speaks of "the heirs of the Promise." Notice that Esau was rejected and Jacob elected to inherit the Covenant Promises before they were even born ! Esau was not rejected for any wrong that he had done ; nor was Jacob's election on the ground of merit. The rejection and election here were solely in the realm of Race and not of Grace.

St. Paul brings this matter out very strikingly in Romans ix. In speaking of Isaac and Ishmael he says :

Verse 7 (R.V.) : "Neither because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children : but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, it is not *the children of the flesh* that are the children of God ; but *the children of the Promise* are reckoned for a seed. For this is the word of promise, According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall have a son."

And again :

"He who was born of the bond-woman was born after the flesh ; but he of the free-woman was by promise" (Gal. iv. 23).

That is, "the Children of the Promise" are nationally "the Children of God."

The Apostle then goes on to speak of the election of Jacob and the rejection of Esau, thus in verse 10 :

"And not only so ; but Rebecca also, having conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, for the children not being yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to *election* might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. Even as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."

The election here spoken of is clearly racial and not that of the Grace of God to eternal life.

After having received his father's parting blessing, Jacob must have set out on his long journey to Padan-Aram with mixed feelings of joy and shame. Joy at having received the Abrahamic promises, but shame and doubt on account of his own conduct in the matter, and vexed with questionings as to whether God would indeed confirm them to him. Lone and weary he arrived at nightfall before Luz. That night in wondrous vision his mind was for ever set at rest on that point, for God appeared and spake to him and said (Gen. xxviii. 13-14) :

"I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac : the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it and to thy seed : and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth ; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south ; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Yet once again, in later years, did God appear to Jacob at Bethel, and blessed him in these words (Gen. xxxv. 11, 12) :

"I am God Almighty ; be fruitful and multiply : a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins : And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

Thus far the Covenant Promises had passed intact and entire to Isaac and to Jacob : But how were they distributed amongst the twelve sons of Jacob ? Up till then the Birth-right had not descended on the first born, and yet once more it did not fall to the lot of the eldest.

Jacob had twelve sons. It was very obvious which was his favourite. It is evident that he intended that Joseph, the first born child of his beloved Rachel, should be pre-eminently blessed. The robe of many colours was the dress of the first born ; even as the "goodly raiment" was the distinctive dress "of her (Rebecca's) eldest son, Esau," marking him out as the heir. It was a mark of the heir, and indicated Jacob's choice. The wonderful dreams of the lad would only confirm the proud father in his choice, for we read (xxxvii. 11), "but his father observed the saying," or as the R.V. puts it, "kept the saying in mind." Reuben, the first born, through his sin, had incurred his father's displeasure and was thereby debarred from the proud position that was his by birth.

If, however, Jacob had any intentions of making the birth-right over to Joseph, his hopes were all shattered by the disappearance of his son, whom he considered to be dead indeed. "Joseph is not" was his settled conviction. In reading the subsequent history of the family it is obvious that Judah took the leading position amongst the sons and seemed destined to inherit the birthright, for he became his father's right hand. In the course of years, however, the long-lost son is discovered to be alive and to be the supreme power in Egypt under Pharaoh. Thither Jacob and his sons went down with all their families and substance, and were preserved alive from famine.

The disappearance and loss of Joseph in oblivion and his ultimate finding again in exaltation and power was prophetic of what was to happen long centuries after to his seed. "God has written for us their after history in miniature, when he caused the story of Joseph in Egypt to be so graphically,

so minutely, so exquisitely portrayed. The similarity was no less touching than it is striking. Separated from his brethren ; carried by violence from the Promised Land ; cast into a pit ; doomed by banishment and exile ; sold into slavery ; pronounced by his own family and their surroundings to be 'lost' ; mourned over by his father as 'dead' ; as years rolled on, his very name forgotten by the world ; yet the whole time safe in another land, experiencing in truth, tremendous vicissitudes of fortune, yet watched over unremittingly by Him Who had preordained that Joseph should have the Birthright ; advanced to unparalleled honour and dignity, and so completely changed that when his brethren saw him they recognized him not ! Yet can this tale, so passing strange, be true ? Was this indeed the long-lost Joseph before whom the travellers stood ? They had come into personal contact with him. They had held official, commercial, and diplomatic relations with this mighty potentate. Had he really been their own brother, one who had been brought up amongst them, dwelling together for seventeen years, is it *possible* that one and all of them should have been so utterly oblivious of his features ?" (Extract from *The Coronation Stone*, by Mrs. G. Albert Rogers.)

Before his death the aged patriarch called his twelve sons around him, and with the spirit of prophecy strong upon him, pronounced his dying blessings upon them, and foretells their conditions in the far-off "latter days."

As we read them we are struck with the significant fact that two of these sons are singled out for blessings far above the other ten, namely, Judah and Joseph. They are given the dual priority over their brethren. It is here we have the beginning of a division, which developed as the years rolled on until that day when God divided His people, His elect, into the two families of Israel and Judah, when they became two kingdoms, each to work out a separate destiny in the latter days.

The house of Joseph, as represented by Ephraim and Manasseh, and the house of Judah were ever after this the rival tribes, and the leaders of the two great parties in the

commonwealth of ISRAEL till the final rending of the kingdom after the death of Solomon. Ephraim, whose tribal emblem was the unicorn or bull, was the leader of the northern Ten-Tribed kingdom, while Judah, whose tribal emblem was the lion, was the dominant tribe of the southern kingdom. These two tribes were ever striving for the mastery, a condition best described by the ancient nursery rhyme, "The Lion and the Unicorn fighting for the Crown!"

Later prophecy foretells a great reunion when this rivalry is to cease (Isa. xi. 12-13) :

"And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."

The other ten sons of Jacob had little in the way of signal or peculiar blessings. They had the common general heritage of the land, etc. They appear to be blessed as they are associated with the son that received the Birthright, that is, under the hegemony of Joseph.

The Covenant Promises reach their highest point in these blessings as pronounced by Jacob on his sons. As he himself puts it :

"The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills" (Gen. xlix. 26).

Such are the words of the man who had "power with God" and "prevailed" ! (Gen. xxxii. 28).

A fine summary of the blessings of these two sons is given in I Chronicles v. 1, 2, speaking of Reuben, the first born, it says:

"His birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel ; and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler ; but the Birthright was Joseph's."

Thus, though Judah had a glorious blessing, the actual Birthright was given to Joseph.

Before Jacob thus blessed his twelve sons, he had received the two sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, and had definitely adopted them as his own. He had already bestowed on these lads the great Birthright blessing which he was about to confer officially on their father in the presence of his brethren. In Hebrews xi. 21 we are told :

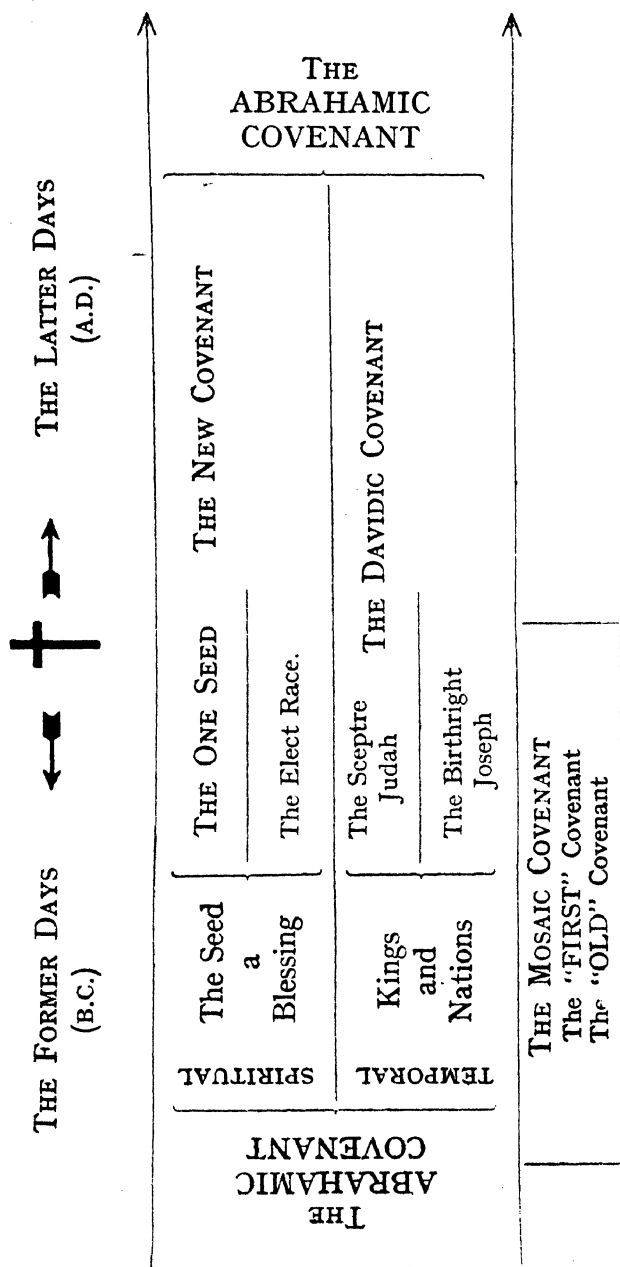
“By faith Jacob, when he was adying, blessed the sons of Joseph : and worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff.”

In doing this he preferred the younger before the elder and placed Ephraim before Manasseh. Both received the Birthright, but the greater share was ever to be Ephraim's. Hence it was that God spoke of him as “Ephraim is My first born” (Jer. xxxi. 9). It is curious to note in tracing the Birthright blessing, that it never fell in its fullness on any first-born. The eldest son was either absolutely cut off from the line of Promised Blessing as in the case of Ishmael and Esau, or partially displaced by a younger son, as with Reuben and Manasseh. In the case of Reuben only was it for wrong-doing.

Up to this point we have duly considered matters bearing on the Promises made to the Fathers, and not their actual contents. Thus we have discussed the Election of the Race : have noted that the Covenant was Unconditional : that it was twofold in character, containing Blessings Spiritual and Temporal : that it was Everlasting, without any break : we have learnt the Age when it was to be in full working force : and lastly that these blessings were to run in a particular line, not on “the Children of the Flesh,” but to “the Children of the Promise,” and to these even as God had severally determined them.

We are now in a position to consider the Promises themselves and to endeavour to fathom their meaning.

TABLE V.—THE FOUR COVENANTS MADE WITH ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED.



CHAPTER III

THE PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS (*contd.*)

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CHAPTER III

THE PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS (*contd.*)

THE ANALYSIS OF THE PROMISES

THE Promises made to the Fathers were given by God on eleven different occasions.

To Abraham, seven times.

To Isaac, twice.

To Jacob, twice.

Then there are the Blessings of the twelve sons by Jacob, and of his two grandsons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Three times to Abraham they were made either by Covenant or Oath. Twice they were termed "Covenant," while on the seventh occasion it was on Oath, "By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord." The Covenant and Oath are referred to in the Benedictus of Zaccharias (Luke i. 72) :

"To perform the mercy promised to our Fathers : and to remember His holy *Covenant* ;

"The *Oath* which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us."

In the Epistle to the Hebrews vi. 13, etc., the one by Oath is specially mentioned :

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater : and an oath for confirmation is to them the end of all strife. Wherein God willing more abundantly to show the heirs of the *promise* the immutability of His counsel confirmed it by an *oath* : that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us," etc.

The promises to Isaac and Jacob are not spoken of as "Covenant," or as being given on "Oath," in the Book of Genesis, as is the case with Abraham. But in Ps. cv. 9-10 God's blessing to Isaac is spoken of as "His Oath unto Isaac," and the blessing to Jacob as "an Everlasting Covenant."

Four prominent temporal blessings stand out in the Covenant Promises made to Abraham :

1. The Seed a Blessing.
2. The Gift of the Land.
3. The Multiplicity of Seed. "Nations."
4. A Royal House. "Kings."

To Isaac only the first three are definitely mentioned, viz., The Seed a Blessing ; The Land ; and Multiplicity.

To Jacob all four are repeated.

When Jacob passed on the blessings to his sons, he did not refer to The Seed being a Blessing, or to The Gift of the Land, but he emphasized The Multiplicity of Seed and the Royal House. Joseph received the Multiplicity and Judah the Sceptre : or Joseph the blessing of "Nations" and Judah that of "Kings" ; or as 1 Chronicles v. 2 :

"Judah prevailed above his brethren and of him came the chief ruler ; but the birthright was Joseph's."

The blessing of Multiplicity was the pre-eminent characteristic of the Birthright.

These four great items merit close examination. This may be done in one of two ways : Either take each separate occasion when God spake and analyse the different details : or take one topic at a time, such as The Land or Multiplicity, and trace it through all the promises in which it is mentioned. This latter method will here be adopted and followed.

The following table gives at a glance the various occasions on which they were named.

ANALYSIS OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

TABLE No. VI

Promises to	No.	Genesis	Seed a Blessing	The Land	Multi- plicity	The Sceptre
Abraham	1st	xii. 1-	Yes ?	No ?	Yes ?	No
	2nd	xii. 7	No	Yes	No	No
	3rd	xiii. 14-17	No	Yes	Yes	No
(Covenant)	4th	xv. 5-18	No	Yes	Yes	No
(Covenant)	5th	xvi. 2-8	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	6th	xxi. 12	No	No	No	No
(Oath)	7th	xxii. 16	Yes	No	Yes	No
Isaac	1st	xxvi. 3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	2nd	xxvi. 24	No	No	Yes	No
Jacob	1st	xxviii. 13	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	2nd	xxxv. 9	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

I. THE SEED A BLESSING.

The promise that the Seed should be a blessing to all the world is the greatest of all, and transcends all the other things contained in the Covenant Promises. It was conferred once in precise terms to each of the three patriarchs. There are also two other occasions on which it was declared that in Abraham the nations or families of the earth would be blessed, though it was not specified in so many words that it was to be through the Seed. To take the latter passages first :

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great ; and thou shalt be a blessing : and I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee : and *in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed*" (Gen. xii. 2-3. R.V.).

This is a very important passage : special attention is drawn to it in the New Testament. In it we have the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in germ. In

these words the Good News was preached unto Abraham (*vide* Gal. iii. 8) :

"The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached *the gospel* beforehand unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all the nations be blessed.*"

The teaching is clear. The blessing is to be through his SEED. Whatever secondary meaning the words may have, the essential and paramount fact is that it refers to blessing through our Saviour.

The verses 17 to 19 of Genesis xviii. give what may be called a Divine Soliloquy. The words were not spoken to Abraham ; they were God's thoughts concerning him. In them we have exactly the same idea expressed :

"Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do ? seeing Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and *all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him ?*"

While this verse is not referred to in the New Testament, it must be obvious that the same interpretation must be applied to it as to the one above. Otherwise it would mean that the blessing was to be solely through the lineal descendants, the "great and mighty nation." It will not be denied that these are in a secondary and subordinate sense to be a blessing to all nations in the gracious purposes of God. They are the elected instrument or the chosen channel that was to take The Blessing, Christ, to all the nations.

On the occasion when God confirmed the promise with the oath, blessing through the seed was given to Abraham :

"In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore ; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies ; and *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*" (Gen. xxii. 17).

When God spoke the first time to Isaac, He repeated the same blessing :

"And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries and *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*" (Gen. xxvi. 4).

To Jacob, on the first meeting at Bethel, God said (Gen. xxviii. 14) :

"And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south; *and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*"

The words to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are identical save in the expressions "nations" and "families." In each instance it is preceded by the promise of multiplicity of their seed, which clearly refers to natural progeny and lineal descendants. At first sight the "thy seed" of the promise under consideration would appear, in all three instances, to refer to their descendants, to the race: that it evidently referred to the "thy seed" which was to be as the stars and as the sand on the seashore for multitude, which was to possess the gate of their enemies, which was to have the Land and which was to spread all over the earth. But St. Paul, under direction of the Holy Spirit, tells us that it has a far higher meaning than that we would naturally gain from reading the phrase. He tells us that it refers to our Blessed Lord (Gal. iii. 16):

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

The Promised SEED in and through Whom blessing is to come is Christ, the ONE SEED of Abraham, the long-promised "SEED of the Woman" Who should bruise the serpent's head. Everything is in Him, everything depends on Him. Without Him, apart from Him—nothing! He is The Blessing of God to the nations and families of earth. He is the Redeemer of Israel and the Saviour of the world. Without Him there can be no blessing. Before He came blessing was only conferred because of the anticipatory work of Him that was to come. Without Him the chosen race can have no blessing themselves, nor have any blessing to offer to the nations. Apart from Christ they cannot bless the world. The ONE SEED having come, the race of Abraham can now be a blessing, can now hold forth to the nations their own Messiah as the Saviour of the world, and can show forth His praises to all mankind. Thus, and thus only, can this race bless the nations. From other Scriptures, if not from these

particular verses, we learn that to it is committed this glorious service, it has been predestined, chosen, selected and called to be Jehovah's Servant to the nations.

The extent and success of this work of the chosen race in being a blessing to all nations and families of the earth may be gauged by the remarkable words uttered by our blessed Lord when He said,

"And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God" (Luke xiii. 29).

He was foretelling the future realization of the Covenant Promise.

Where then is the race, which in these latter days, however imperfectly, is doing this work, which is evangelizing the world, which is sending out messengers to all nations with the glad tidings, which is giving the Word of God to peoples of every tongue in their own language? It ought now to be carrying on this service if God's promises are to hold good.

This may be a suitable place to consider a cognate theme, namely, the forecast given by God of the national characteristics of the rule and government of the chosen race.

In what has been called the "Divine Soliloquy" there occur these remarkable words which immediately follow those quoted above (Gen. xviii. 19) :

"For I know him (Abraham) that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, *to do justice and judgment*; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him."

His seed was nationally "to keep the way of the Lord." Is there of the races one which is doing this more than any other, however feebly?

The marked feature of its rule is "to do justice and judgment" in the earth. Does this characterize any race extant to-day? There ought to be one, if this is a faithful promise. What race more, far more, than all others, is bringing the blessings of justice and judgment to the peoples of the earth? Bringing liberty, freedom and fair dealing amongst the down-trodden and the oppressed? Establishing peace and justice, law and order for those people that come under their

influence and sway ? Are not these the characteristics of British rule in India ? Was it not so in Egypt and Mesopotamia (Iraq) ? Was it not characteristic of the rule of the United States of America in the Philippines ? These nations were raised and put upon their feet by our race. Is not this indeed the Race that has established justice and peace and freedom, and has put down tyranny and oppression ? Is it not the Race in which these great promises are beginning to be fulfilled ?

There certainly is no other.

2. PROMISE OF THE LAND

The foregoing table No. VI shows that the gift of the land is mentioned in four out of the seven declarations to Abraham ; in one of the two made to Isaac ; and in each of the two to Jacob.

The first mention of the land is when God appeared to Abraham when he dwelt in Haran. It is a strange thing that when Terah his father left Ur of the Chaldees his purpose was to go to the land of Canaan (Gen. xi. 31). He only got as far as Haran, however, and settled there with his family. It was there that Abraham responded to the call of God (Gen. xii. 1) :

“Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house unto a land that I will show thee.”

God here did not exactly promise the land to him, nor did He tell him what or where this land was, for in Hebrews xi. 8 it is written :

“By faith Abraham when he was called to out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed : and he went out not knowing whither he went.”

Gen. xii. 5 tells us :

“ . . . and they went forth to go to the land of Canaan ; and into the land of Canaan they came.”

As soon as he had come into Canaan, “unto the place Sichem (R.V. Shechem), unto the plain of Moreh,” God

appeared the second time unto him and told him that this was the land that was to be his (verse 7).

"And the Lord appeared unto Abraham and said, Unto thy seed will I give *this land*."

This was the land of Canaan.

In the next chapter, after his first sojourn in Egypt, and after the departure of Lot, God spoke the third time to him (Gen. xiii. 14-17) :

"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art (between Bethel and Hai), northward and southward and eastward and westward : for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. . . . Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it ; for I will give it unto thee."

Here it is limited to the range of vision : as far as he could see was to be the boundary.

Note the words, "Lift up now thine eyes." In a preceding verse we read that Lot "lifted up his eyes" and beheld all the plain of Jordan, and chose it. God had been the silent witnesser of Abraham's generous behaviour to the younger man, and now comes to him and bids him to lift up his eyes ; and not merely to look eastwards as Lot had done, but all round the compass, to the north, south, east and west : yea, even to the east which Lot had chosen, and promised to give it all to him.

On the next occasion, the fourth, when God made the "Covenant," He again mentioned the Land, but this time the bounds of it far exceeded in extent anything that had gone before (Gen. xv. 18) :

"In the same day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given *this land*, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."

How the boundary has increased ! On the east the Euphrates, from its source to its mouth in its long stretch of many hundreds of miles. On the west or south-west is "the river of Egypt." What river is this ? This is not a needless question. It is open to two answers, and opinion is much divided on the subject. Ordinarily speaking the river of Egypt is the Nile. But is this the one intended here ? For there is a

stream that actually bears that name to the south of Gaza, which empties itself into the Mediterranean, and is named "River of Egypt" in the Bible maps. In modern times it was the boundary line between Egyptian territory and Palestine under the Turkish empire. It hardly merits the name of "river" since it is a poor watercourse, existing only in the rainy season, while it is a dry stream-bed in the hot months.

It makes, of course, a vast difference in the extent of the promised territory according as to which river is here meant. If it be this stream, the expanse of the land is great indeed. It involves a fan-shaped area from this stream to the whole length of the Euphrates. It includes Haran and Ur of the Chaldees, the very places from which God called away His servant. Padan-Aram also comes into it, the region to which Abraham would on no account permit Isaac to go and settle down.

If it means the river Nile, the territory is vast indeed, as will be indicated by drawing lines from the headwaters of the Nile to the mouth of the Euphrates, and from the Nile delta to the source of the great river. In addition to the regions above mentioned it would include Egypt, the Sudan, Uganda, Abyssinia, the Somali lands and Arabia !

It does not seem likely that an enormous territory would be bounded on the one side by a gigantic landmark like the river Euphrates and on the other by such an insignificant stream as that at El Arish. The Nile, however, would form a river boundary corresponding in majesty to the Euphrates.

Can the point be definitely settled from the Scriptures ? In Hebrew there are two words for river : *Naharza* and *Nachal*. The former means a proper river, while the latter signifies a winter torrent.

The expression "the river of Egypt" occurs in five other passages in the Bible : (1) Numbers xxxiv. 5 ; (2) Joshua xv. 4 ; (3) Joshua xv. 47 ; (4) 1 Kings viii. 65 ; and (5) 2 Kings xxiv. 7. In the first four of these this "river" forms part of the boundary of the land (Canaan) occupied by the tribes in those times (not the boundary that was to be in

“the latter days”). In each of these verses the Hebrew word is *Nachal*, the winter stream, manifestly that to the south of Gaza. The same word is used in the last of the above verses (2 Kings xxiv. 7).

Now the remarkable thing about our text is that the word for “the *river* of Egypt” is not *Nachal*, the winter torrent, but *Naharza*, signifying the perpetual river. In this passage only is this word used for “the *river* of Egypt,” and it is very significant and can only mean the river Nile.

When God therefore made promise of the larger land to Abraham, He set as its boundaries the two mighty rivers, the Euphrates in the east and the river Nile to the west.

These two majestic rivers with the adjacent lands came into the possession of the British Empire at the end of the Great War. Very significant surely ! How is it that God gave to the Anglo-Saxon race the very land that He gave by Oath and Covenant to the seed of Abraham in the latter days ? We have now made Egypt and Iraq independent states, in alliance with us. If this race be not the seed of Abraham it will have to surrender it all to the birthright race, its rightful owners ; and that very soon since students of prophecy tell us that the latter days are fast running out.

The next promise of the Land was made to Abraham on the occasion when God again renewed the “Covenant” with him and changed his name from Abram to Abraham :

“And I will give unto thee and unto thy seed after thee the *land* wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God” (Gen. xvii. 8).

This and all the later references to the land are strictly limited to Canaan.

To Isaac who proposed to go down into Egypt God thus spoke :

“And the Lord appeared unto him and said, *Go not down into Egypt* : dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of : Sojourn in *this land* and I will be with thee and will bless thee ; for unto thee and unto thy seed I will give *all these countries* and I will perform the Oath which I swarc unto Abraham thy father” (Gen. xxvi. 2, 3).

Isaac’s parting blessing to Jacob has this reference :

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"God Almighty . . . give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and thy seed with thee ; that thou mayest inherit *the land* wherein thou art a stranger which God gave unto Abraham" (Gen. xxviii. 3-4).

Jacob was to be a sojourner in Padan-Aram, but he does not seem to realize that the promised land included that.

On the first occasion at Bethel God said concerning the land (Gen. xxviii. 13) :

"The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed."

On the second occasion at Bethel, many years later, God said (Gen. xxxv. 12) :

"And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

This would not only be Canaan, but the larger region from "the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

Jacob when in Egypt told Joseph of God's promise of the land to him (Gen. xlviii. 4) :

"And will give this land to thee and to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession."

Here the land of Canaan is clearly meant. It is strange that this is the only recorded statement of Jacob on the subject of the land to his sons. He did not say anything about it when blessing the twelve.

This completes the study of the gift of the land promised to the fathers. In its widest extent it was never possessed by the Twelve Tribes even in the golden days of Solomon. This is not surprising, for the promise in its fullness was reserved for "the latter days." The chosen Race ought to be coming into their inheritance. The British hold the land of the Nile, from its source to outfall, and also the river Euphrates from the Persian Gulf to Mosul and beyond. The whole territory named by God must ultimately be occupied by the seed of the Promise, namely, by the Jews and the other house of Israel.

3. MULTIPLICITY OF THE SEED

The blessing of Multiplicity of Seed, or Multitudinousness, was given to Abraham on five out of the seven times, twice to Isaac, and twice to Jacob. (See Table No. VI.)

The expressions used about multitudinousness are very wide. It may be urged that they are merely figurative. This may be conceded, but something very great must be pre-figured by them.

When God first called Abraham from Haran, He said : "I will make of thee a Great Nation." These words perhaps do not state overwhelming population, but that idea is surely implied. The nation is certainly to be "Great."

The second mention of the seed was made on the third occasion ; God said (Gen. xiii. 16) :

"I will make thy seed *as the dust* of the earth ; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed be numbered."

This "as the dust of the earth" surely implies something phenomenal. Abraham's seed is to be an innumerable host.

On the fourth occasion, when the "Covenant" was first instituted, God

"brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven and tell *the stars* if thou be able to number them ; and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (Gen. xv. 5).

On the previous occasion it was to be as the "dust of the earth," here it is as the "stars of heaven." This language means more than we ordinarily allow. It must come true some time in the latter days. Where is this increasing race to-day ? It does not seem to be represented by the Jews. The Jews all told would only fill two cities as big as London and no more. This seed must be somewhere according to specification.

On the fifth occasion, when the Covenant was enlarged, God repeats the promise in yet another form and instill more detail, Abraham's wife Sarah was associated with him in it :

"As for Me, behold, My Covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of *many nations*. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham ; for a father of *many nations* have I made thee. And I will make thee *exceeding fruitful*, and I will make *nations of thee*. . . . As for Sarai, thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her ; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of *nations*" (Gen. xvii. 4-16).

Note the expression "exceedingly fruitful."

Abraham is to be "father of many nations," Sarah is to be "mother of nations." Abraham is not to be the father of many nations in the sense that he is the father of the Ishmael nations and father of the nations that sprang from his sons by Keturah. This promise means that in these latter days the seed of Abraham and Sarah, the children of the Promise, must consist of "nations," "many nations." The Jews do not fit this description. They are but a scattered and homeless people under divine displeasure, and not in blessedness as here indicated. Where then is the fulfilment of this promise? Is it being developed in these our times? If God's word is true it must be so. The latter days are fast hastening to a close: we ought to find some measure of fulfilment of this word of Jehovah.

The fifth promise of multiplicity to Abraham was made on the seventh and last time on which God spoke, when it was confirmed by Oath on Mount Moriah (Gen. xxii. 16-17):

"By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in *multiplying* I will multiply thy seed as the *stars of the heaven*, and as the *sand* which is upon the seashore."

Previously it was to be as "the dust of the earth," "the stars" of heaven, now it is as "the sand" of the seashore, emphasizing countless hosts. This concludes the subject as far as Abraham is concerned.

Before turning to God's utterances to Isaac note should be taken of the benediction given to Rebecca by her relatives when she left her home to be the bride of Isaac. They knew of the Covenant of God with Abraham. They would have learnt it from Eliezer, if they had not heard of it before his visit. They knew to what Isaac was heir, and they blessed her in these words:

"Be thou the *mother of thousands of millions*, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them" (Gen. xxiv. 60).

These words, if not divinely inspired, are divinely recorded and are therefore not without import.

The promise of multiplicity was twice confirmed to Isaac. The First Time (Gen. xxvi. 4) :

"I will make thy seed to *multiply as the stars* of heaven."

The Second time (Gen. xxvi. 24) :

"I am the God of Abraham thy father ; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and *multiply thy seed* for My servant Abraham's sake."

There is nothing new in these declarations. They are a restatement to him of what God had promised his father.

Before looking at God's words to Jacob there is the parting blessing of Isaac to him ere he started for Padan-Aram, conveying to him the great Covenant, in which this multiplicity forms so prominent a feature (Gen. xxviii. 3) :

"... And God Almighty bless thee and make thee *fruitful and multiply thee* that thou mayest be a *multitude of people*" (R.V. a company of peoples).

The expression "a company of peoples" is a striking one and occurs here for the first time.

On his way to Padan-Aram Jacob received God's gracious confirmation of the Covenant to him, and thus did Jehovah speak on the subject of multiplicity (Gen. xxviii. 14) :

"Thy seed shall be *as the dust of the earth*, and thou shalt *spread abroad* to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south : and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Here we have teeming population again given "as the dust of the earth." But there is a new feature, telling of a spreading abroad to the four quarters of the globe. This does not mean a punitive scattering. It is not a dispersal in disgrace and punishment. It here implies blessing, a glorious and conquering expansion owing to excessive population. Here we have indication of vast colonial extension.

The directions of this spreading abroad are given in a way that is unusual. If it simply meant to the four points of the compass, why is this peculiar and unusual order, west, east, north and south ? As a rule it is north, south, east and west. Is this strange order of any significance ? Does it really

mean that the spread of the race was to begin first to the west, and then definitely in an eastern direction, and so on ?

Where is there a race to be found to-day spreading into the four quarters of the globe, colonizing the world, whose first great colonial expansion was certainly to the west ? The Jews are a widely scattered people, but they in no way correspond to the prophecy here.

In later years we find Jacob pleading with his God this Bethel promise in these words (Gen. xxxii. 12) :

"And Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the *sand of the sea*, which cannot be numbered for multitude."

Yet once again, later at Bethel, did God speak to Jacob concerning his seed, and use these striking terms :

"I am God Almighty : *be fruitful and multiply ; a nation and a company of nations* shall be of thee" (Gen. xxxv. 11).

God had already spoken to him of "a company of peoples" : here it is more precise, "a Nation and a Company of Nations," or in modern terms a Nation and a Commonwealth of Nations. The description of what the race was to be in the latter days grows more precise ; features and particulars are added to the promises in such a way that it narrows down the field for identification. Here we have distinctive particulars as how this race is to be grouped, a forecast of their present-day grouping. The description does not apply to the Jewish race, the only people whom Christians will usually admit to be the Children of the Promise. What race is there now on earth that consists of "a Nation and a Commonwealth of Nations" ? Can it indeed be the seed of Jacob ? Originating from the northern kingdom of Israel, which was carried away captive to the south-west of the Caspian Sea, and whose people, Esdras tells us in the Apocrypha, migrated from that region into the south-east of Europe even to Ar-Sareth ? The people that the prophets foretold were to be wanderers and afterward to be restored to God's high favour, brought nationally into the Bond of the Covenant, even the New Covenant in Christ Jesus, and then as a multitudinous people were to rejoin the house of Judah (the Jews) and possess the great Land of Promise ?

When in Egypt Jacob rehearsed to Joseph the first promise of God made to him at Bethel, which Joseph no doubt remembered hearing in the days of his boyhood (Gen. xlviii. 4) :

"Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee *a multitude of people*" (R.V. a company of peoples).

Before his death, as already stated, Jacob gathered his twelve sons around his bed and gave them his blessings. The Birthright was given to Joseph only, and in these words he conveyed the gift (Gen. xlix. 22).

"Joseph is to be a *fruitful* bough, even a *fruitful* bough by a well ; whose branches run over the wall : . . . (verse 25). The Almighty, Who shall bless thee . . . with blessings of the breasts, and of the womb."

Here is the blessing of fecundity, of expanding population, the overflow of offspring, the encroaching on other territories. What a vivid picture of colonization ! The name "Joseph" signified "addition" or increase. This blessing was not given to Judah, hence it is not surprising that his descendants, the Jews of to-day, do not possess this particular characteristic. Joseph's race is to be a colonizing people. To Joseph thus fell the special blessings of "a company of peoples" ; "a Nation and a company of Nations" ; and the spreading to the west, east, north and south.

The subject of multitudinousness is not yet exhausted, for before blessing his twelve sons Jacob had already received the two sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, and had bestowed on them in advance the birthright blessing that he was officially about to confer on their father in the presence of his brethren.

By faith when he was adying, he blessed the sons of Joseph. It is very remarkable that in the great record of the acts of the Heroes of Faith, as given in Hebrews xi. nothing is mentioned of Jacob save this one act of blessing the sons of Joseph ! It is upheld to us as his surpassing act of faith, greater than the episodes at Bethel or Peniel, which are not even mentioned. Surely the significance and meaning of this transaction has been lost on the Church of God. He first

equally blessed both the lads in these words (Gen. xlviii. 15, 16) :

"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads ; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac ; and let them grow into *a multitude in the midst of the earth.*"

Conjointly multiplicity of seed was given to the two lads. The expression "let them grow into a multitude" is a very strong one. The margin has it "let them grow as fishes do increase." They were to swarm as fishes do. What a graphic description of increase of population !

Having thus conferred on the two a common and equal blessing, Jacob went yet further, and set the younger before the elder. Speaking of Manasseh he said (verse 19) :

"He also shall become *a people*, and he also shall be *great.*"

And then of Ephraim :

"But truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become *a multitude of nations.*"

The name "Ephraim" means "fruitfulness."

Here we have further specializing, further details of the conditions of the race in the long-distant future. This race is to be found in some sort of separation amongst itself. It is not to be one homogeneous people. It is to consist of two main parts. Manasseh is to be a distinct "great people," but Ephraim must exist as "a multitude of nations," corresponding to the previous promises, "a company of nations." Does a race exist to-day that at all fulfils these specifications ? Is there one kindred people that consists of a Company of Nations on the one hand, and of "a great People" or Nation on the other ? The terms depicting the chosen race of Abraham are not a simple proposition. They are not such that any race would naturally expect to take. The chances of any race fulfilling so many specific particulars are infinitesimal. Hence if a present-day people is found possessing them, the conclusion would be overwhelming that they were the very people thus foretold and depicted, and the absolute identity should be fully acknowledged.

The expression "a multitude of nations" used of Ephraim is important, and merits attention. The Revised Version margin renders it "a fulness of nations."

Ephraim was in the latter days then to be a fulness of the Gentile nations—to be the head, the leader, the dominant power of the Gentiles. The Ten-Tribed kingdom of Israel of which Ephraim was the leading tribe was "divorced" from God and would therefore lose the sign and mark of the Covenant, even circumcision; but it was later on to be rebetrothed and brought into the bond of the Covenant—not the Old Covenant, but into the New—and since circumcision is not the sign of the New Covenant, the old kingdom of Israel in the latter days will not have the mark of the Old Covenant. It must exist as an uncircumcised or Gentile people. The Jews, on the other hand, were never "divorced" from the Old, and, since they reject the New Covenant, are still to be found under the Old Mosaic Covenant, and still have its sign.

Ephraim then in these days—for we are now in the closing period of the latter days—must be found as a Fulness of the Nations, or Fulness of the Gentiles. Is there a nation or empire in the world that may thus be designated? If it is not the Anglo-Saxon Race, it does not exist on this earth. What then becomes of the word of the Living God?

4. THE PROMISE OF THE SCEPTRE

The promise of "kings," or of a royal line, will be seen by reference to the table to have been given once only to Abraham, and not mentioned to Isaac, but named again once to Jacob, and it was eventually conferred on Judah.

To Abraham :

Gen. xvii. 6: "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and *kings shall come out of thee.*"

And regarding Sarah :

Verse 16: "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; *kings of people shall be of her.*"

To Jacob it was thus stated (Gen. xxxv. 11) :

“And God said unto him, I am God Almighty ; be fruitful and multiply ; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, *and kings shall come out of thy loins.*”

On each of these occasions there had been a change of name made by God. Abram was changed to Abraham ; Sarai to Sarah ; and Jacob to Israel.

“Kings shall come out of thee,” and “Kings shall come out of thy loins,” are the expressions used to the two men ; while at Sarah it is, “kings of people shall be of her.” Such words do not admit of any spiritualizing interpretation, but are obviously literal. A regal line of kings is to spring from these people, and the promise, be it noted, is closely associated with the multiplicity of seed shown in the words “nations,” “many nations” and “a nation and a company of nations,” etc. The kings of Israel and Judah, as given in the Books of Samuel and Kings and Chronicles, do not fully meet the requirements of this promise, for in their times the race did not attain the immense population depicted here. It could only in measure be fulfilled by those kings from David to Zedekiah, because the promise in its fulness was for the latter days. If the promise is to hold good the multitudinous seed of Abraham in the latter days must be governed by a line of kings of his race.

This topic was taken up by Jacob when blessing his twelve sons. This blessing was not conferred on all the sons, not even on Joseph, the inheritor of the birthright, but on Judah alone (Gen. xlix. 10) :

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.”

This is interpreted for us in 1 Chronicles v. 2 :

“For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler” (margin, “Prince”).

The promise concerning Judah then is that the royal line of kings was to be of his descendants, and, that once it started, it was not to cease, for the sceptre “shall not depart from

Judah." There is to be no hiatus in this line of kings, it was to be continuous "until Shiloh come."

Here surely is the origin of the Divine Right of Kings !

This promise conferred on Judah was reaffirmed in the Davidic Covenant, a Covenant which, on careful study, will be found to be an unconditional one, and in which perpetuity is again a marked feature. God's Covenant with David was that his house, his kingdom and his throne were to be continuous (2 Sam. vii. 10-16) :

"And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee ; thy throne shall be established for ever."

An in Psalm lxxxix. 3 and 35-37 :

"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. . . .

"Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, as a faithful witness in heaven."

This line of kings was only to cease when Christ comes to the earth to take the sceptre and the throne of His father David and rule over the house of Jacob for ever. These kings cannot be explained away by any spiritualizing interpretations. The King (or Prince) over Israel all down the ages was to come of Judah's seed. Therefore, to-day, in these latter days, there must be a King of Judah's tribe ruling over the nations of Abraham's chosen race, otherwise the promise has failed.

The Jews cannot be the only representatives of the seed of Abraham, for they have no king. To argue that the first advent of our blessed Lord was the coming of Shiloh referred to here will not hold, because He never in that age took the throne of His father David or ruled as a King on earth. But were the suggestion admitted, how is it possible to reconcile the great hiatus that exists between Zedekiah, the last of Judah's kings, and the first coming of Christ, with the statement that the sceptre should not depart till He came ?

As Shiloh, the Christ, is to reign over the chosen race when He comes a second time, He must, to meet the terms of this Promise, be of the tribe of Judah. Hence it was that He was born of the house and lineage of David, and of the tribe of Judah. To Him will the kingdom be given, and to Him shall the gathering of the people be. To-day He is the spiritual head of it, a blessed and glorious fact ; when He comes again He will be its King in His bodily person.

As far as the Jews are concerned, there is no king over them, nor have they had one of David's line since their carrying away into Babylon. But the Jews do not represent all the seed of Abraham. God's promise about the perpetual sceptre cannot have failed, nor has it. But this subject does not fall under this present chapter, and is dealt with elsewhere.

The four prominent blessings in the Abrahamic Covenant Promises have now been examined : there remains yet another, which, in our ignorance perhaps, is considered a minor point, to be noticed.

THE GATE OF THEIR ENEMIES

The possession of the gate of their enemies is one of the latter-day blessings conferred on Abraham's race. It was mentioned on the last occasion on which God spoke to His servant and confirmed the promises with the oath. It is not referred to in either of the revelations made to Isaac or Jacob. To Abraham God said :

"In blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore ; and *thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies* ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 17).

What is meant by "the gate" ? Two answers have been given to this question. First, it is used in Scripture to denote the place of public assemblies : the council for civil administration and for the court of justice. Second, it is the strategic point of a city's defence. Let the promise be taken to cover both definitions. To possess the gate of the enemy

means, then, that the chosen race is to be able to speak with their enemies in the gate : implying that they can dictate terms to the enemy, that they have an effective voice in the councils of their foes. It also means that they hold the strategic point in the defences of those that hate them, the position that controls the situation, for if the gate is taken the city lies at the mercy of the captors. Such is to be the position of Abraham's race in these days. Their voice is to be heard in the councils of their foes with due respect, if not submission. They are to hold the key positions and strategic points, which give them the mastery and control over their opponents. Israel was to "tread upon the high places" of their enemies (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

Which of all the races has the preponderant or dominant voice in the councils of the nations, and that is able to speak with increasing authority ? Which of all the races hold the key positions that control the world for commerce or for warfare ? Search through the nations for such a race. Look at the great gates of the seas, the mighty strategic world positions : Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, the Suez Canal, Perim, Aden, the Cape, Singapore, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and the Panama Canal, etc. These are pre-eminent gates.

It has been pointed out that the promise says "gate," and not "gates." What is *the* Gate of the world, if any one place can deserve such designation ? What is the one position beyond all others that may be said to be *the* Gate ? It has been suggested by some that Constantinople is such. It may or may not be so. Suffice it to say that if it is, it must sooner or later assuredly fall into the hands of Abraham's race. There is really nothing in the distinction between "gate" and "gates," for there must be more than one gate for the different enemies. All the foes would not have one gate between them ; each enemy has its own gate.

The family of Rebecca, having learned that the gate of the enemies had been promised to Abraham's seed, re-echoed it in their parting blessing to her as she left them :

"And they blessed Rebecca, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and *let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them*" (Gen. xxiv. 60).

There remain yet but two points to consider : the Forecasts of Military Prowess and Invincibility, and of Maritime Supremacy. These are indeed only in embryo in these promises made to the Fathers, but they develop as the story proceeds through the Bible and gain force and strength in later prophecies. To deal with them effectively it would be necessary to trace the topics through the succeeding Scriptures, which is beyond the scope of this chapter. They will, therefore, be but briefly noticed. They are embodied in the blessings conferred on Joseph and belong to the Birth-right heritage.

MILITARY PROWESS AND INVINCIBILITY

As Jacob looked forward into the coming ages he foretold the invincibility of Joseph's seed (Gen. xlix. 23-25) :

"The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him and hated him ; but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob . . . even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty. . . ."

It is a picture of struggle, victory and conquest. The triumph is all due to the interposition and help of God on behalf of His people. "For there is none other that fighteth for us but only Thou, O God." It is in keeping with the promise of Power and Dominion conferred on Jacob in the blessing of his father Isaac :

"*Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee* : be lord over thy brethren and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee : cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee" (Gen. xxvii. 29).

The blessing given by God to Jacob at Peniel was to descend to his seed, and they were to have power with God and *with men and should prevail*.

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel : for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. xxxii. 28).

Where is the race to-day whom God has strengthened and delivered all through its history, making them conquerors and giving them the victory over enemies far stronger than themselves? The mind dwells on the Anglo-Saxon Race in the days of danger from the power of Spain, and our deliverance from the mighty Armada by the interposition of God: In the days of dire peril from the great threatened French invasion in the days of Napoleon, and our God-given victories at Trafalgar and Waterloo: In the days of this last Great War with Germany, when men's hearts were failing them for fear of the things that threatened us with overwhelming disaster—our hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, and victory was granted to the Anglo-Saxon Race and its allies.

FORECAST OF MARITIME SUPREMACY

The great blessing of Maritime Power to Joseph's seed was foreshadowed in the words "blessings of the deep":

"... The Almighty, Who shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, *blessings of the deep that lieth under*" (Gen. xlix. 25).

The oceans with their wealth are to be the peculiar portion of Joseph's progeny. Here lies the germ idea of their future mercantile marine greatness and naval supremacy. The naval and mercantile fleets of Ephraim and Manasseh are to be the dominating feature of these peoples in the latter days. It is the promise of "the Command of the Sea," Dominion on the oceans, the Rule of the waves.

Is there a race in the world to-day which holds the mighty navies and commercial shipping as here foreshadowed? There ought to be such a race consisting of a Commonwealth of Nations and also a Great People if this promise (which is reinforced by later prophecies) is to hold good.

The blessing given to Zebulun by Jacob bears on this topic (Gen. xlix. 13):

"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon."

This tribe is to have some share in the Naval Covenant given to Joseph. Its people are to be pre-eminently a seafaring section of Abraham's race in the latter days.

This closes the study of The Promises made unto the Fathers. It is undeniable that the Anglo-Saxon Race is to-day in the enjoyment of these various and detailed promises which belong to the Birthright. In this Race is found the gracious fulfilment of them in every particular. There is only one logical conclusion, namely, that the Anglo-Saxon Race is the long-lost House of Israel.

"Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." (Micah vii, 20).

CHAPTER IV
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CHAPTER IV

THE PARABLES OF BALAAM

THE figure of Balaam stands out in the Scriptures as one of its mysterious personages. His is a difficult character to analyse. A man of occult powers, he dealt in devilish and wicked arts ; a soothsayer, a clairvoyant, he practised divination and enchantments. And yet he was one who knew something of God and acknowledged His power, a man to whom God spoke, and who recognized His voice, though he was no servant or child of the living God.

Israel had arrived in the borders of Moab and had filled its people and king with fear. The dread of Israel had fallen upon the Moabites. Balak, their king, distrusted purely military force as a sure defence against the threatened invasion, and decided to resort to witchcraft and divination to aid him in the struggle. Hence he sent to the renowned Balaam and called in his help. Balaam eventually surrendered to the summons and uttered Four Parables concerning the people of Israel.

These Parables were given from three distinct places, all mountain tops. The first was from "the heights of Baal," whence he could see the whole of the vast masses of the invader. The second place was near the field of Zophim on the top of Pisgah. From here Balaam saw but a part of the people. Balak thought that seeing only a portion of them, he might be more readily induced to curse them. What made this king think so is a puzzle. The third place was "the top of Peor," whence again an entire view of Israel's hosts could be obtained. It was from here that he delivered the Third and Fourth Parables.

These Four Parables are to be taken, not as any human utterance, but as the words of Jehovah, spoken though

they were by this strange man. Of this there can be no doubt, for not only do we read that God directly commanded him to speak no other message than that which He gave him, but that Balaam also confessed on each occasion to Balak that he was not a free agent in this matter, but that he was under a Divine compulsion to repeat only the words of Jehovah (Num. xxii. 20, 35, 38 ; xxiii. 3, 5, 12, 16, 26). Not only did "God put a word in Balaam's mouth," but it is stated on the third occasion that "the spirit of God came upon him" (Num. xxiv. 2).

These Four Parables were prophetic utterances. They did not concern the then present. Balaam had "second sight." He was "the man whose eyes are open," "which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty" (Num. xxiv. 3 and 4). He looked down the long vista of the centuries and saw the condition of Israel. He saw visions of the future.

Is there any means of learning the period in which they are to fructify ? There is no time indication in the first three of them. But in the fourth the age is distinctly foretold. Before Balaam departed from the incensed Balak, he commenced his Fourth Parable in these words (Num. xxiv. 14) :

"And now behold I go to my people : come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people *in the latter days*."

What he foretold was for the latter days. It is clear that it gives the age or period for the accomplishment of all these visions. It is to be in the same age as that in which the Promises made to the Fathers were to be fulfilled. It will be remembered that Jacob's blessings on his twelve sons were prefaced by the words :

"Gather yourselves together that I may tell you that which shall befall you *in the last days*" (R.V. "the latter days") (Gen. xlix. 1).

Balaam's Parables and Jacob's Blessings were to be concurrent in point of time.

Balaam's Parables are to be fulfilled, therefore, in the

Christian Dispensation. They ought then to be developed or developing in the very times in which we live.

A marked feature of these Parables is that they only depicted blessedness for Israel. They were all blessings for this people. All the passages proclaim this truth. To Balaam God said :

“Thou shalt not curse the people : for they are blessed” (Num. xxii. 12).

Balaam declared to Balak (xxiii. 20) :

“I have received commandment to bless : and He hath blessed ; and I cannot reverse it.”

The words of the irate king, after the First Parable, were (xxxiii. 11) :

“Behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.”

And after the Third Parable (xxiv. 10) :

“Behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times.”

There is no room for question on this point. They portray blessing, great and abundant. These Parables in no way depict a people in humiliation, degradation, shame, nor one undergoing chastisement or just judgment at the hand of God.

It has been pointed out that these Parables were uttered concerning the Twelve Tribes “unitedly.” This is so, but to conclude that they can only be realized by all the Twelve when they are in political union is rather begging the question. It ignores the great fact that God Himself in later years separated the Twelve into two sections, into the Houses of Israel and Judah. To say that these Parables cannot apply to the one house without applying to the other is to state what is not warranted. To say that they cannot be true for one section who are walking nationally in obedience and in Covenant with God, while not applying to the other section, who are not walking nationally in obedience to God, is to strain the point beyond all justice. When the two Houses of Israel and Judah shall one day be reunited

as foretold by the prophets these Parables will have their fullest accomplishment. The consummation of this great reunion hastens on apace.

THE FIRST PARABLE.

Num. xxiii. 7-10 : "And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel.

"How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed ? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied ?

"For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him : lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

"Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel ? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his !"

If a single verse were studied as an isolated statement, it might be possible to draw deductions from its apparent meaning that might be contradictory to the truth and land the reader in a quagmire. Such a verse must be interpreted in the light of others bearing on the same topic, and must be interpreted in the light afforded by and in consonance with the others. Not that it must be explained away or whittled down to mean nothing. It must have its own full force. But its true meaning must be made clear by the other pronouncements which at first sight might appear contradictory. A sound rule is to take the words in their plainest meaning, unless another fair and legitimate meaning be indicated or demanded by the context or cognate verses as the better. Take the words "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

The first thing to recollect is that they embody a blessing. It is in no sense a punitive declaration. There is no idea of degradation or humiliation involved in it. To apply it, therefore, to the Jewish people in these latter days is wholly unwarranted. It is quite true that they are not reckoned among the nations and that they do live alone. But to suggest that they (living as they do in isolation amongst the nations of the world in prescribed quarters in the cities of

Europe, in their Ghettos) are described by these words hardly holds. They are now nationally under the curse and are not standing in favour with God ; they have been for centuries and are still enduring the wrath of God to the uttermost. There has been no glory or blessedness in their isolation. Theirs has been an isolation that is regarded as punitive and derogatory. It has been a mark of contempt and shame. This verse, therefore, cannot apply to their condition and state, because it indicates prosperity, blessedness, honour and security. The context, moreover, forbids such an application. The description of this people dwelling alone is given in the words that follow, "Who shall number the dust of Jacob, and the number the fourth part of Israel?" These imply immense population, a teeming host, which the Jews have never been in the past centuries and which they certainly are not to-day, since there are only sixteen millions of them in the world, only twice the population of London ! Words such as these recall the promises of multiplicity made to the Fathers that their seed should be as the dust of the earth (Gen. xiii. 16 and xxviii. 14). One must therefore look elsewhere than to the Jews for the fulfilment.

More than one construction may be lawfully put upon these words. A race or nation may dwell alone in more senses than one, it may "not be reckoned among the nations" in more than one way. It will be noticed farther on that Balaam himself speaks in the Third Parable of Israel's king as being "higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted" (xxiv. 7), and Israel is to "eat up the nations his enemies." This is the description of a mighty conquering nation or empire. It is difficult to conceive how such a people should not be reckoned among the nations in the ordinary sense of the words.

In considering this text it is necessary to bear well in mind the previous promises made concerning the seed of Abraham. The Promises made to the Fathers thus described the race. It was to be a great nation (Gen. xii. 2) :

A great and mighty nation (Gen. xviii. 18) ;
Nations (Gen. xvii. 6 and 16) ;

Many nations (Gen. xvii. 4) ;
 A multitude of people (Gen. xxviii. 3) ;
 Nation and a company of nations (Gen. xxxv. 11);
 A fullness of the (gentile) nations (Gen. xlviii. 19);
 A people great (Gen. xlviii. 19).

It was to spread abroad in prosperity and power to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south (Gen. xxviii. 14).

In the face of these statements it is difficult to see how such a race could exactly dwell alone. How could they be an expanding group of nations, many nations and a fullness of the nations, without, in one sense, living with the nations or being reckoned in the ordinary meaning of the words among them? Israel was to become the chief of the nations (Jer. xxxi. 7).

The Jews were reckoned among the nations until the time that they ceased to have a national existence. As they are now not a nation but only a scattered people, they naturally cannot be counted amongst them. But in this passage the idea is that an existing great and mighty nation was, in some sense, not to be reckoned among the other nations. They were to be on a different plane. Being a divinely chosen race they were not comparable with others, but unique and standing alone. They were like the Stone kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which smote and destroyed the image. It differed from the other earthly empires in that it was "cut out without hands."

Further, Moses spoke of the race in its future exaltation and honour in this way :

"And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments; and to *make thee (high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour ; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken"* (Deut. xxvi. 18-19).

They are to be high above all nations—the same idea of "a fullness of the nations" ; or, as he put it elsewhere :

"The Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail ; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath" (Deut. xxviii. 13).

The race was to be the head of the nations and not beneath them. Further, Moses said of Israel that they were to "dwell alone" even as our verse does :

"Israel then shall dwell in safety alone" (Deut. xxxiii. 28).

This people were then to be the leading nation or group of nations and yet, in some way, were not to be reckoned among the nations ; and in a sense and security they were to dwell alone. God's promise given to David in later years has some bearing on this. In 2 Sam. vii. 10, God says :

"Moreover, I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more ; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime."

In these words is stated the fact that God was to find a place, other than the Land promised to the Fathers, where Israel might dwell apart from the nations and where they were to be safe and secure from invasion. In this appointed place Israel could live alone and separate. This opens up a large and a most interesting field for investigation, and this subject is considered in a subsequent chapter.

There is yet another striking and illuminating passage that deals with this alone-ness of Israel. Note what David says on the subject in 1 Chron. xvii. 21 :

"And what one nation in the earth is like unto Thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be His own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before Thy people, whom Thou hast redeemed out of Egypt ?"

The answer is, of course, "There is no other people." "He hath not dealt so with any nation" (Ps. cxlvii. 20). In this respect Israel was unique, and could not be compared or reckoned with other nations. But notice the marginal reading :

"And who is like Thy people Israel, *a nation that is alone in the earth*, whom God went to redeem," etc.

This throws light on the meaning of the term "alone." It is in this sense that Israel dwells alone and is not reckoned among the nations.

THE SECOND PARABLE.

Num. xxiii. 18-24 : "And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear ; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor ;

"God is not a man, that He should lie ; neither the son of man that He should repent ; hath He said, and shall He not do it ? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good ?

"Behold, I have received commandment to bless, and He hath blessed ; and I cannot reverse it.

"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel ; the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.

"God brought them out of Egypt : he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel ; according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought ! Behold the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion ; he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain."

This is truly a notable Parable from more than one point of view. Balak had hoped that Balaam might have been induced on this second occasion to reverse his first benediction, but he was sorely disappointed. Balaam told him that God did not go back upon His word. The first pronouncement was a blessing and this second is but blessing enhanced and amplified. "He hath blessed ; and I cannot reverse it." What a comfort this is ! Man can never reverse God's great will and purpose for the blessedness of His elect race. Yea, even the perversity of His people cannot ultimately annul His design. It is well to weigh and realize the following sentence :

"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel."

How could this ever be ? At that very time in the holy ark where the evidences of iniquity and sore perverseness. The pot of manna bore witness to their sin. Aaron's rod that budded testified of perverseness. The two tables of stone inscribed with the ten commandments were eloquent

that God's holy commands were constantly broken, as was prefigured by the actual breaking in pieces of the original two tables. And yet God saw not the sins of His people. How could this be? The only answer is that they were all under the Mercy Seat. The blood-sprinkled mercy seat covered and hid from view the tokens and proofs of sin. And so it is in these latter days, Israel, under "the Bond of the Covenant" (the New Covenant, see Ezek. xx. 37, and Jer. xxxi. 31 and 33), is nationally under the Blood of the New Testament, and God regards His elect race, nationally, from that point of view. Who shall tell the preciousness of that Blood? Blood of the Son of God. Precious Blood shed for the redemption of Israel and for the personal salvation of every individual sinner on earth. What cleansing is there either for the nation or the individual apart from this precious Blood? Suffer a word, Reader, are you personally under this shelter? Happy the soul that can with humility and all confidence say:

"Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress."

The Parable goes on to say that this pardoning God is to be with His people, "The Lord his God is with him" in a special and wonderful way. And as a result the people have "the strength of an unicorn," indicating might and power. With Jehovah as their God no enchantment or divination of foes can ever prevail against this chosen race. God's workings on their behalf shall be acknowledged one day by the whole earth in the astonished exclamation, "What hath God wrought?" The concluding verse described the people as a lion, previously it was likened to the unicorn, but now to "a lion" and "a young lion." Such is the description of Israel in the latter days. It in no way portrays the present condition of the Jews. There is no shout of a king among them, but the verse clearly tells that there is to be amongst the seed of Abraham. How is this seeming contradiction to be explained? Surely it is very evident that the Jews do not to-day represent all the elect seed of Abraham. Israel is, by the types of the lion and the unicorn, shown to be a

mighty, victorious and conquering empire and kingdom, in entire conformity with the great Promises made to the Fathers, and especially to the conquering seed of Joseph in Genesis xlix.

THE THIRD PARABLE.

Num. xxiv. 3-9 : "And he took up his parable, and said, Balam the son of Behor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said :

"He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open :

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel !

"As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.

"He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

"God brought him forth out of Egypt ; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn : he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.

"He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion : who shall stir him up ?

"Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee."

Here is a picture of a prosperous people. The Lord has planted them in a pleasant place, for they are "as the trees . . . which the Lord hath planted." The verses do not read in a way suggestive of Palestine. It certainly does recall the promise to David :

"I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own," etc. (2 Sam. vii. 10).

Balaam saw Israel in the latter days in the Appointed Place, which will be shown in another chapter to be the Isles in the West.

This seed is to be "as cedars planted by the waters." The words "by the waters" can only signify connection with seas or ocean or islands, for the following can only refer to such :

"He shall pour the waters out of the buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters."

The words "He shall pour the water out of his buckets" convey little meaning to those unacquainted with the East. They have reference to the mode of watering the fields under cultivation, to irrigation of the land. What then is the meaning here? Surely that Israel shall be pre-eminent in the matter of irrigation, causing desolate places to bud and bring forth fruit, to make the wildernesses productive through irrigation schemes on a remarkable scale. The average Englishman knows little of what Britain has done for the great Empire of India by its irrigation system, bringing huge tracts of countries under productive cultivation. A new era of prosperity has been set up in Egypt by the great irrigation scheme of which the Assouan dam is the monument. It has changed the face of the country. Under God Britain has made the wilderness to blossom.

"His seed shall be in many waters."

It is evident that this people is to be a great maritime race. The study of Jacob's blessings to his son Joseph, the holder of the Birthright, shows that "the blessings of the deep" were conferred on Joseph. Mercantile and Naval Supremacy were to be the heritage of the house of Joseph. His two sons Ephraim and Manasseh came in for this blessing. It will be remembered that the one was to become "a multitude of nations" or, as the promise was to Jacob, "a Company of Nations," while the other, Manasseh, was to become "a People Great," or the Nation. These were to be the Supreme maritime powers of the world. And here in this Parable Balaam says that the seed of Abraham "shall be in many waters," not confined on one coast but to be found in the seven seas and ruling the waves, a wonderful corroboration of Joseph's "Naval Covenant," as it has been called. If our Parable is God's truth, the people of Israel ought to be found in these days of ours in many waters. This is not true of that portion of Abraham's seed known as the Jews. The supremacy of the sea, naval and mercantile, ought to-day to be in the hands of Israel, and pre-eminently

in the hands of the peoples who represent Ephraim and Manasseh, the leading tribes of the kingdom of Israel. As a matter of fact it is in the hands of the British Empire and the United States of America to-day.

Observe the words that follow :

"His king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted."

Israel, in the age indicated, is to be reigned over by kings, and the words show that they are to be mighty kings, they are to be the greatest of the monarchs of earth. They are no regal puppets over a small and insignificant nation. And yet to-day some peoples profess to recognize the so-called Lost Ten Tribes of Israel among the tribes of Afghanistan, or in north-west Persia, or amongst the Nestorians ! Such opinions are difficult to take seriously after reading the majestic descriptions of Israel in God's word. What is told in this Parable is in keeping with the Promises made to the Fathers. "Kings shall come out of thee" was said to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 6). Of Sarah it was, "Kings of people shall be of her" (Gen. xvii. 16). To Jacob the promise was, "Kings shall come out of thy loins" (Gen. xxxv. 11). When Jacob blessed Judah, he conferred on him the Blessing of the Sceptre. Judah was to be the royal tribe, it was to supply the kings of Israel in an unceasing line of succession, for the word was :

"The sceptre *shall not depart* from Judah . . . till Shiloh come" (Gen. xlix. 10).

Until the coming of the reigning Messiah Israel will be ruled by kings descended from the tribe of Judah without intermission. Yet we know that after the time of Zedekiah no monarch of this tribe ruled over the *Jews*.

The strength and power of this seed is once more spoken of as represented by "the strength of an unicorn" ; and again as "a lion." In the Second Parable it was a "lion" and "a young lion" ; here it is "a lion" and "a great lion." This people is to "eat up his enemies," an expanding, dominating and conquering race.

Bearing on this subject of eating up peoples it is interesting to read what was written of Britain many years ago by the Russian, Vernadsky :

"Britain is a menace to the safety of Europe. She is the most aggressive power of modern times. There is no part of the world where she has not established her garrisons and her colonies. Her fleet dominates every sea. What power is there that has not suffered from her ambition ? . . . She has built up by the sword a military power in Asia which secures her government over 300,000,000 in India. At Aden she holds the gate of the Red Sea. At Singapore she commands the road to China. From Fiji she dominates the Pacific. Her territory is vaster than Russia, and greater in extent than Europe without Russia. . . . Britain is a spider whose web encompasses the whole world within her own dominions. She has all the resources of all the continents. Her empire is stronger and vaster than any coalition of other States. She is a standing menace to all other powers, and her increasing strength is destructive of the balance of power. Nevertheless, unsatisfied and insatiable, she is still grasping for more territory. . . . It is only too clear that the power of Britain is too great to be compatible with the general safety, and that the aggressive Empire, unless speedily checked, will establish a universal dominion over all peoples of the earth."

This was written by this Russian many years ago. One wonders what he would say on the situation after the Great War. In the providence of God Israel is not to be a menace but a blessing to all peoples of the earth.

To continue, Balaam, looking down the vista of time to the latter days, saw this Covenant people under the emblems of the lion and the unicorn. What nation is there to-day that tallies with all the above particulars, and that has for its national and imperial emblems the lion and the unicorn ? It is remarkable that this nation has inscribed as its motto under these very emblems the words "*Dieu et Mon Droit*," God and my Right. What *Right* can belong to the race possessing these emblems save the *Birthright*, the right conferred by God on the House of Joseph ?

This Parable ends with the words :

"Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee."

They are reminiscent of God's promise to Abraham :

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. xii. 3) ;

and of the blessing of Jacob by his father :

"Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee" (Gen. xxvii. 29).

This is the solid possession of the people of Israel in the latter days, and accounts for much that would otherwise be inexplicable in the history of the race. God has said it ; and it is true and effectual to-day.

THE FOURTH PARABLE.

Num. xxiv. 15-24 : "And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said :

"He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open :

"I shall see him, but not now : I shall behold him, but not nigh : there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

"And Edom shall be a possession, Seir shall also be a possession for his enemies ; and Israel shall do valiantly.

"Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

"And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said Amalek was the first of the nations ; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

"And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou putttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

"And he took up his parable and said, Alas, who shall live when God doeth this !

"And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever."

In studying this Fourth Parable it is most necessary to

mark carefully the introduction and to bear it in mind, otherwise it is easy to miss the interpretation of it. Here is Balaam's preface (verse 14) :

"And now, behold, I go unto my people : come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days."

The Parable was to show Balak what the people of Israel was to do to the people of Moab somewhere in the time of the Gospel Dispensation. The words are plain and admit of no mistake, "What this people shall do to thy people." There is nothing spiritual about this ; it is wholly spoken of literal peoples and of temporal things.

"I shall see him, but not now,
I shall behold him, but not nigh :
There shall come a Star out of Jacob,
And a Sceptre shall arise out of Israel :
And shall smite the corners of Moab
And destroy all the children of Sheth."

It is a parable of war and fighting, of conquest and destruction. It is what Israel is to do to the people who represent the Moabites of these latter days. What is the meaning of "the Star" and "the Sceptre" ? To whom do they refer ? Do they mean our Lord Jesus Christ ? They are to smite and destroy ? When the Christ comes He begins on earth His Millennial Reign, and there will be no fighting and wars then.

Let there be no misunderstanding on the point. All believe that our Lord is the Bright and Morning *Star*, and that He came out of Jacob, but not on the evidence and authority of this verse. However applicable the expression may be to the Son of God, it would seem here clearly to apply to His Chosen Race. All believe that Jesus is the Sceptre, that He is the ultimate king of the world ; Shiloh will one day take the Sceptre of his father David and rule over the house of Jacob for ever, but not because of the teaching of this passage, for here it seems more strictly to refer to Israel. Balaam is looking down the centuries. He saw Israel of the future, he beheld him in the far-off age. He saw a great

leader rising amongst this people, who is their king, in whose day Moab is smitten and Sheth destroyed.

If we consider that the primary reference is to Christ, then there must also be a secondary fulfilment of this prophecy in the person of some ruler of Israel.

Further, Balaam goes on to tell that Israel under the leadership of this Star and Sceptre is also to possess Edom :

"And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies ; and Israel shall do valiantly.

"Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city."

By military prowess and invincibility Israel is to gain possession, and out of Israel is to come one that shall have dominion over Edom and take its city. Does this mean any or every city, or does it imply the principal city of that kingdom ?

The Amalekites too are to suffer apparently through Israel.

"Amalek was the first of the nations ; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever."

This nation is come to an end.

Then there are the Kenites. They are a people situated in an almost impregnable position, but they are to be wasted and carried captive by Asshur. Then Asshur's turn comes to be attacked, presumably by Israel. His coast is to suffer a naval blockade and to be very sorely afflicted by the navy of the coast of Chittim.

"And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless, the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

"And he took up his parable and said, Alas, who shall live when God doeth this !

"And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever."

It may not be clear what nations to-day represent Moab and Sheth : or the Amalekites : or the Kenites : or Asshur and Eber ; but the consensus of opinion is that the Turkish Empire represents Edom and Seir.

The dismemberment of the Turkish Empire through the Great War makes this Parable full of interest. To Israel is committed the task of ultimately defeating and possessing Edom. Israel's participation was to be a particularly brilliant military achievement for he was to "do valiantly." The defeat of Edom in the War, though by no means final, was at the hands of the British Empire. Where was Israel? Early in the campaign Turkey lost Egypt and Cyprus, later Britain delivered from Turkish dominion Arabia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria: huge territories most of which, save Syria, have been conceded by the judgment of the civilized world to Great Britain. So it came to pass that the territories promised to Abraham and his seed by Oath and Covenant was mandated to the Anglo-Saxon race.

It is not a little remarkable that Ezekiel's description of the future boundaries of Israel does not include Syria! (Ezek. xlvii. 13-17).

Asshur means Assyria. Some think that the German people represent the ancient Assyrian Empire in the present-day. Dr. Swaner, of Germany, writes: "Germany is a mixture of Philistines, Assyrians and Romans, traditional enemies of Israel. Hence the animosity of Germans to Saxons has its source in the probability that they are the descendants of Israel." If this be correct, the Parable states that she had to be blockaded by the navy of the coasts of Chittim. What is the land of Chittim? It is mentioned in five other places in the Bible. Twice in Isaiah xxiii. 1 and 12; in Jeremiah ii. 10; in Ezekiel xxvii. 6; and in Daniel xi. 30.

On two occasions "the isles of Chittim" are spoken of; and once "the ships of Chittim."

Daniel speaks of "the ships of Chittim" just as Balaam does here. On reading the passage in Daniel it will be noticed that this navy of Chittim is somehow connected with the people of "the holy covenant." If this is a right reading of the passage, it means that these ships belong to Israel, so that the ships of Chittim are the fleet of Israel.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel speak of "the isles of Chittim."

Some have suggested that Chittim is Cyprus, but this it cannot be, since it is a single island and not "isles."

The context in Jeremiah shows that these "isles of Chittim" are intimately associated with "the house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel" (verse 4).

In Isaiah the land of Chittim is linked up with "the ships of Tarshish" in the first verse ; and after referring to Chittim in the twelfth verse it goes on again to mention "the ships of Tarshish" in verse 14. There is close connection between Chittim and Tarshish. They even appear to be one and the same place or country, with a great seafaring nation. "The isles of Tarshish" are evidently "the isles of Chittim." The ships of Tarshish are evidently the ships of Chittim. The isles of Tarshish are in these days known as the British Isles.

In these Parables there are, therefore, two indications that Israel in the latter days is to be a mighty seafaring and naval power in the world, they corroborate the blessing given in the Birthright to Joseph, "the blessings of the deep."

In conclusion, let it ever be remembered that this race was "elected" and redeemed for a great and divine purpose. In the providence of God Israel was not to be a menace but a *blessing* to all peoples of earth. Israel is to stand for "justice and judgment" (Gen. xviii. 19) throughout the world : God's instrument in establishing the earth in righteousness. The rôle of Israel is Service and Sacrifice for God. It is not a matter of self-aggrandizement ; it is no call to self-complacency and luxurious ease, but to strenuous service in the cause of humanity. What a high ideal this is for our Empire and Race ! World Service is the great privilege and honour of World Dominion. Herein lies the corrective for vainglory, and the antidote for foolish jingoism.

After studying the Parables of Balaam it is difficult to conceive that the "Lost Ten Tribes" are to-day to be found merged in the Jews, or that they are amongst the peoples living in the north-west of Persia about the Caspian Sea. If God's Holy Word is true, Israel in these days must be a great and mighty nation, who, with her daughter nations, is enjoying all the wonderful blessings promised by God to the

Fathers, promises some of which are repeated in these very Parables of Balaam (Multiplicity of Seed : Territorial Expansion : The Sceptre and Kings : Military Prowess : and Maritime Greatness). Only one race to-day enjoys all these, and in the purposes of God is elected to be a blessing to all other nations.

Centuries after Balaam's day God called upon His people Israel to keep in remembrance these very utterances of Balaam. Evidently they were important and worthy of serious consideration.

"O my people, *remember now* what Balak king of Moab consulted and *what Balaam the son of Beor answered him . . .* that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord" (Micah vi. 5).

CHAPTER V

THE BLESSINGS OF THE TRIBES BY
MOSES, ETC.

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CHAPTER V

THE BLESSINGS OF THE TRIBES BY MOSES, ETC.

BEFORE his death, Moses, the great Law-giver and Leader of the children of ISRAEL from the bondage of Egypt to the bounds of the Promised Land, blessed the tribes in prophetic utterance, in which is revealed something of their future history. It will be found in Deuteronomy xxxiii. The blessings pronounced on Judah and on Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) interest us more especially as the descendants of these patriarchs constitute the Jews and the Birthright people. It was these tribes who received the paramount blessings given by their father Jacob. To them was accorded the dual priority over their brethren. On Judah was bestowed the Messianic promise, and the promised Sceptre. While to Joseph fell the blessings of the Birthright, conspicuous among which was the blessing of multiplicity. Manasseh was to be a "Great People," and Ephraim a "Multitude of Nations," or a "Fullness of the Gentiles."

These prophetic words of Moses regarding these tribes come at the close of a lengthy discourse to the elders of the people, after the "Song of Moses" (Deut. xxxii.).

Before looking into these blessings, it would be helpful to a right appreciation of their meaning to discover if possible any indication as to when these conditions were destined to be realized.

The great Covenant Promises made to the Fathers were to materialize in "*the latter days*" (R.V. Gen. xlix. 1).

The Parables of Balaam foretelling the future state of Israel were to be fulfilled in "*the latter days*" (Num. xxiv. 14).

Hence it would not be surprising to find that these prophecies of Moses referred to the same age. And this indeed they do. Moses summoned the elders of the tribes and spoke as follows (Deut. xxxi. 28-30) :

"Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you ; and evil will befall you *in the latter days* ; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands. And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation the words of this song until they were ended."

Moses foretold that evil would befall them in "the latter days." Then followed the Song of Moses, and the Blessing of the Tribes. The evil and the good foretold therefore are to come to pass in this specified period.

Once on a previous occasion Moses had given utterance to a prophecy and had stated that it was to be in "the latter days" (Deut. iv. 29-31).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

"When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even *in the latter days*, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto His voice : (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God) He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the Covenant of thy fathers, which He sware unto them."

We have tried to show the blessings pronounced by Jacob, by Balaam and by Moses all relate to "the latter days." The Abrahamic Covenant Promises must not be relegated to the millennial age. They will be fulfilled in the period stated in the word of God.

These are the times we live in. It is conceded by most students of Prophecy that the latter days are rapidly drawing towards their termination ; for the return of the Son of God, His second advent, which is our blessed hope, is hastening on. The time for realization of these great promises must therefore have fully come.

THE BLESSING OF JUDAH.

The Blessing of Judah here by Moses is very different from the blessings spoken of him by Jacob (Gen. xlix. 8-12). Nothing is said of "the Sceptre," the royal line of kings that was to rise out of Judah ; nor is there any Messianic promise

uttered here. Quite a new note is struck and one that contains a distinct ring of sadness (Deut. xxxiii. 7) :

“And this is the blessing of Judah : and he said, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people : let his hands be sufficient for him ; and be Thou an help to him from his enemies.”

The words indicate separation and oppression. Moses prays that God will hear the cry of Judah and be a help to him against his enemies. If Judah was not to be in separation from his people of the other tribes in the latter days, what is the meaning of the words “bring him to his people” ? The request must be that Judah may rejoin the other tribes. It is a prayer for the reunion of the two houses of Israel and Judah—that great reunion which was a theme of the later prophets, e.g. the union of the two sticks into one as foretold by Ezekiel (xxxvii. 15-28). Moses foresaw the future rending of the tribes. If the exact interpretation of this verse is open to question, it nevertheless remains a fact that Judah has been in these latter days in oppression and also in separation from the other tribes of ISRAEL. In view of this fact the interpretation here given must be the correct one. Moses foresaw the coming division, and the future separation of Judah. It is important to bear this in mind in reading the other passages in which Moses speaks of the future tribulations and glories of the tribes of Israel.

THE BLESSING OF JOSEPH.

Deut. xxxiii. 13-17 : “And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof, and for the goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush : let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns : with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth : and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.”

This passage is a restatement of the Birthright. In reading through the blessings of the tribes it is very manifest which of them received the great Birthright. Moses confirms the truth that it was the tribe of Joseph. His words are but an amplification of those in which the blessings had been bestowed on Jacob's heir in Genesis xlix. There are striking parallels in several phrases of the two utterances.

We have in these words a picture of :

1. Abounding Wealth and Prosperity.
2. Maritime Blessing.
3. Military Prowess and Invincibility.
4. Colonial Expansion.
5. Multiplicity of Seed.

I. WEALTH AND PROSPERITY.

Wealth, riches and prosperity are to be the portion of Joseph in the latter days. The words recall the blessing of Jacob by Isaac (Gen. xxvii. 27, 28) :

" . . . See the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed : Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine. . . . "

They are reminiscent of Jacob's words to Joseph (Gen. xlix. 25, 26) :

" . . . the Almighty who shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills : they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of him that was separate from his brethren."

2. MARITIME SUPREMACY.

Maritime supremacy, which was a part of the Birthright, finds a place in the words of Moses. Jacob, it will be remembered, had conferred "*the blessings of the deep that lieth under*" upon Joseph. Moses here confirms it in the words, "*blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath.*" Balaam also had foretold Israel's latter maritime position (Num. xxiv. 7) :

“ . . . his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.”

It will be seen by referring to Genesis xlix. 13 that Zebulun was to have some share in the maritime blessing. He was to “dwell at the haven of the sea,” and he was to “be a haven of ships.” This also is confirmed by Moses ; and Issachar also is associated with Zebulun (Deut. xxxiii. 19) :

“ . . . for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand.”

It is evident that these two tribes are to contribute to the maritime supremacy of the seed of Joseph.

If all this is true, Israel to-day ought to be a great maritime people, holding the Supremacy of the Seas. The question naturally arises, What race now holds such a position ?

3. MILITARY PROWESS AND INVINCIBILITY.

The seed of Joseph is to be a pushing, spreading race ; it is to push the people together to the ends of the earth.

“His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns : with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth.”

This implies conquest. In his Third Parable Balaam spoke of Israel as eating up the nations (Num. xxiv. 8) :

“God brought him forth out of Egypt ; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn : he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.”

Balaam spoke of “eating up the nations,” while Moses spoke of “pushing the people together to the ends of the earth.” What race on earth to-day is fulfilling this rôle ? Where is this conquering, invincible Israel ?

Moses represented this people under the figure of the bull or bullock, because it was the tribal emblem of Ephraim (the greater of the two sons of Joseph). He also uses the figure of the unicorn, which in the Revised Version is given as “wild ox,” merely another form of the previous figure. In the above quotation of Balaam Israel is in like manner

symbolized by the unicorn or wild ox. In his Second Parable Balaam again used the same figure (Num. xxiii. 22) :

"God brought him forth out of Egypt : he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn."

Ephraim was always the Bull tribe, and since he was the leading tribe of the northern kingdom of Israel, the bull became the national sign of that people. The dominant influence of Ephraim with the tribes is manifest in the fact that his emblem formed the object of worship at the foot of Sinai, when Aaron was forced into making the Golden Calf (Ex. xxxii. 4) ; and again when Jeroboam set up the Golden Calves in Dan and Bethel (1 Kings xii. 28). The prophet Hosea, who prophesied to the House of Israel (not to Judah), constantly refers to the nation under their national emblem. So fixed and constant is this throughout their Scripture history, that it would not be surprising if it persisted even to the present days, and for the nation still to have as its emblem the bull, and be known as the Bull nation. Balaam, it will be noticed, gave the lion as well as the unicorn as emblematic of Israel. It is deeply interesting to notice that the only people who in every detail fit the prophecies concerning Israel of the latter days should actually have the lion and the unicorn emblazoned on their national coat of arms, and that no other people has ever had this combination of emblems, save the Kimmeri, of whom Marchant writes :

" . . . The Kimmeri who were the Taurini, or people of the bull. . . . This people not only had the Bull-Unicorn, but placed one horn on the forehead of the lion in their sculpture, as may be seen in Perrot's book, also in Ragazin's *Media*."

These Kimmerians came on the scene of history in those very regions to which the Ten Tribes were carried captive. There is no record of this people before the captivity of Israel, and they have been identified as that very people.

4. COLONIAL EXPANSION.

Colonial expansion and territorial acquisition is also implied in the words, "he shall push the people together

to the ends of the earth." Jacob had said of his son (Gen. xlix. 22) :

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, *whose branches run over the wall.*"

His branches or offspring were to pass over their own boundaries and encroach upon and occupy the territories of others. God had told Jacob of his expansion (Gen. xxviii. 14) :

"And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth ; and *thou shalt spread abroad* to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south."

5. MULTIPLICITY.

The blessing of multiplicity of seed, which was such a marked feature of the Birthright gift to Joseph, again receives due recognition at the hands of Moses. In reading through the blessing of each tribe it will be noted that of Reuben it is said "let not his men be few," and of Asher, "let Asher be blessed with children." But concerning the house of Joseph the words are :

" . . . these are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh."

Moses thus emphatically pronounced the blessing of multiplicity upon the house of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh), and not upon the other tribes. He also recognized the previously declared priority of Ephraim (Gen. xlvii. 19, 20). His blessing is in strict conformity with those uttered by Jacob, though not in such striking language.

The Peroration of the Tribal Blessings by Moses was a sublime utterance (Deut. xxxiii. 26-29) and there are some points in it which merit close attention :

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms : and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee ; and shall say, Destroy them.

"Israel then shall dwell in safety alone ; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine ; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

"Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Truly happy and unique is the position of Israel, differentiated from all the other nations of earth !

What is intended by this dwelling alone ?

"Israel shall dwell in safety alone."

These words are similar to those of Balaam in his First Parable (Num. xxiii. 9) :

"Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

Most people take these isolated words as applicable to the Jews, but, if the context is observed, it will be found that they cannot be so applied.

1. They are spoken in blessing, to a people enjoying favour and blessedness. Now the Jews enjoy neither, their isolation and segregation is a punitive and derogatory condition, it implies shame and dishonour. They have been a homeless and oppressed people (except in Anglo-Saxon lands, a very significant fact). Since their rejection of the Messiah the wrath of God has come upon them to the uttermost. Their condition in no way fits the blessedness here depicted.

2. They are not "*dwelling in safety alone*." For long centuries they have been anything but safe.

3. They are spoken of by Moses as "treading upon the high places" of their enemies. This cannot apply to the Jews. Why should it not apply to the tribes from whom Judah was to be separated ? "Treading upon the high places" of their enemies is the equivalent of the previously foretold blessing that they should "possess the gate of their enemies" (Gen. xxii. 17).

4. The context of Balaam's words shows that it cannot mean the Jews. He asked, "Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel ?" (Num. xxiii. 10). Implying teeming population. This does not apply to the Jews.

5. Balaam yet further described them as having "the strength of an unicorn or wild ox" (Num. xxiii. 22). Now this emblem was not the national one of Judah, but of Ephraim and the kingdom of Israel. Having the strength of an unicorn is certainly no description of the condition of the Jews to-day, or in the past centuries.

6. Lastly, Balaam said of this people: "The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them" (Num. xxiii. 21). The separated house of Judah or the Jewish portion of the Twelve Tribes has had no king over them since the days of Zedekiah, save alien rulers. Everything points to the conclusion that the words "the people shall dwell alone" refer to the other house of Israel and not to the Jews.

This concludes the Blessings of Moses upon Judah and Joseph. None of these prophecies were realized in Old Testament times (the Former Days) for the simple reason that they were foretold the Latter Days, the times in which we live. There are many other predictions of Moses in relation to the future of the people which are beyond the scope of this chapter. Attention will be called to a few only of them.

THE WORLD POSITION OF ISRAEL.

There is a very remarkable statement in the Song of Moses that has not received sufficient attention or recognition (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9):

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

"For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance."

We all believe that God has placed the nations of earth in their particular lands, and has set the bounds of their habitations, but is it equally recognized that all His plans and arrangements are developed with one single purpose and end, that all of them centre round the destiny of one race, "the children of Israel"? Everything is subordinated to His great purpose for His elect race, which He here

calls His "portion" and "the lot of His inheritance." So it is decreed, and His purpose will not miscarry. We inadequately realize the tremendous destiny of Israel in the latter days. The responsibility of this people is overwhelming. The magnificent blessings with which they are loaded were not for self-aggrandizement or self-glorification, but solely that they might worthily serve God in being a source of blessing to all nations, to glorify God in their service to mankind, that they might be the instrument in God's hand for the bringing the nations into the knowledge and blessedness of the great love of God to them in Christ Jesus. There is no room here for boasting, it is excluded. "Because He loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them" (Deut. iv. 37).

"Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day" (Deut. x. 15).

It is for no merit or deserving that Israel is thus blessed (Ezek. xxxvi. 22 and 32). Israel will have no cause for pride or vainglory, but rather a holy fear and dread lest they should seem to come short of their high and holy calling. No wonder that Moses exclaimed (Deut. xxxii. 29) :

"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end "

Many have doubtless taken this verse to refer to the end of life, death ; that one should ever live in the remembrance that death must come ; but this is not its true meaning. Moses longed above all things that Israel might ever keep in mind the high latter-day destiny for which God had elected them : that they might have a keen perception of the great rôle which, in the divine purpose, they were to play.

If the Anglo-Saxon race realized its calling, privilege and destiny, what an incentive would there be to be up and doing in the service of God to the nations, and to evangelize the world by the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel !

In this Song of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 5 and 26) we note the term "Jeshurun" which is applied to Israel. It is one that occurs only four times in the Bible, three in Deuteronomy

and one in Isaiah. The meaning of the word is "the darling upright," a Hebrew poetical appellation of Israel, deeply significant of the heart of God towards His chosen race.

THE ABRAHAMIC AND THE MOSAIC COVENANTS.

The confusion on the subject of these two Covenants is amazing. It is found not alone among the unlearned, but in quarters where it would be least expected.

Moses, speaking of the Covenant of the Law at Horeb, said (Deut. v. 2, 3) :

"The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us alive this day."

The Mosaic Covenant had, of course, nothing to do with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ; it was not made with them. It had nothing to do with the Promises made to the Fathers (Rom. iv. 13) :

"For *the promise*, that he should be the heir of the world, *was not* to Abraham, or to his seed, *through the law*, but through the righteousness of faith."

Nor did it in any way affect or alter the Abrahamic Covenant. That still stood inviolate in all its integrity, and with all its terms unimpaired : not a single item of it was abrogated or alienated. This is clear from Galatians iii. 17 :

"Now this I say : A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of non-effect."

The Mosaic Covenant was :

1. A temporary Covenant.
2. A Covenant between two parties, a Contract.
3. An entirely conditional Covenant.
4. A Covenant that could be broken.

In all these points it differed completely from the Abrahamic Covenant.

1. The Mosaic Covenant was intended only to persist till the Christ, the promised SEED of the Abrahamic Covenant,

should come. "It was added . . . till the Seed should come." The previous Covenant with Abraham was an everlasting one, continuous and persistent, every item of which Christ came to confirm. God had established it between Himself and Abraham and his seed "*in their generations* for an everlasting Covenant" (Gen. xvii. 7). There was to be no break in its continuity, no suspension, or abeyance, or alienation.

2. The Mosaic Covenant was a Contract, in which there were two consenting parties. Each side covenanted to keep certain specified terms. It was one between God on the one hand and the seed of Abraham on the other. There were penalties attached for any breaking the terms. Not so the one with Abraham, which was altogether one-sided. It was no contract between two consenting parties. All the obligation was (be it reverently said) on God's part. The terms consisted only of what He covenanted to do ; as far as the man was concerned, he rendered nothing in the way of contract. It consisted of Promises by Word, Covenant and Oath to the man, of whom nothing was demanded. Let it be repeated, it was altogether one-sided.

3. The Mosaic Covenant was conditioned on obedience to the Law. The Abrahamic was wholly unconditional to Abraham's seed, and was independent of all merit or deserving. The disobedience of the seed did not disannul the Covenant or even affect its integrity. It was beyond their power to modify it in any way. God was and is going to carry it out in spite of everything. In the end His will shall be done through the efficacy of His redeeming love in His dear Son, and through the gracious influences of His Holy Spirit.

4. The Mosaic Covenant could be broken, because man was one of the contracting parties. By failure to fulfil his part of the contract, it could be broken and made of non-effect and he thereby made himself liable to the penal clauses attached to the bond, i.e. the curse of the Law. There were no such conditions with the Abrahamic Covenant. The race could not break or keep it. It was not in their hands. They

could only "keep" the sign of the Covenant. All the obligations were on God's side, not on theirs, God alone was pledged. It was truly a very wonderful and God-like Covenant. Disobedience and wrong-doing could detach the people from the Mosaic Covenant, but could not detach them from God's Promises made by Covenant and Oath to Abraham. The New Covenant in Christ Jesus, far from doing away with these only brought them into force and execution. He put them into action ; their full realization only awaited His great redeeming work. Whenever ISRAEL is accused of breaking or commended for keeping God's Covenant, the one referred to is always the Mosaic, for the simple reason that they could neither keep nor break the terms of the other. But when God is said to remember, or keep, or perform the Covenant, it might be the one or the other. The context usually enables us to say which it is ; and to read with understanding the point should always be noted.

THE "SEVEN TIMES" PUNISHMENT.

In declaring the penalties for breaking the Mosaic Covenant, God, through Moses, pronounced four punishments of "Seven Times." These are found in Leviticus xxvi. 18, 21, 24 and 28. Each punishment was Seven Times. It is an enigmatical expression. It indicates a definite period of time. Students of Prophecy have been able to find the key to its meaning, and with great accuracy determine the exact duration. By studying the various passages that deal with such terms as "time" or "times," etc., especially in reference to already fulfilled prophecies, they have established the value of "a time" as meaning a period of 360 years. Hence "Seven Times" becomes 2,520 years. These Seven Times ran in the main concurrently. Though pronounced upon the Twelve tribes, they fell upon them when they were divided into the two nations, Israel and Judah.

This long period would begin for the northern kingdom of Israel when it was carried away to Assyria. The main deportation of that people took place in 676 B.C. Reckoning

in solar years (of 365 days each) from that date the "Seven Times" should terminate about A.D. 1848 : if the reckoning be made in lunar years (of 354 days each), it would mean an earlier date than this, i.e. about A.D. 1769. The heavy hand of God's chastening should then be lifted and the day of their national exaltation should begin. They should then commence at least to enter into the splendour of the blessings promised to the Fathers. The question naturally arises, What nation or race about that very time commenced its phenomenal expansion of population, of territories and colonies, of sea power, of commerce and wealth, and of world-wide propagation of the Gospel? The Anglo-Saxon race is the complete and only answer to the question. There is yet a further instructive point, namely that this very race has now come into possession of the Promised Land and is reinstating the other branch of ISRAEL, namely the Jews, in that land as indicated by the prophets.

The Land promised to the Fathers was pre-eminently the land of Canaan, but it was not confined to this, it was far more in extent than Palestine. It extended from "the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. xv. 18). Moses understood it to be far more than Canaan. He described it as (Deut. xi. 24) :

" . . . from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea, shall your coast be."

He gives the boundaries as the Mediterranean in the west to the Euphrates on the east, which was fully realized in Old Testament times. This is not so great as that given in Genesis, i.e. from the Nile to the river Euphrates, which territory must eventually come into the hands of ISRAEL.

Amongst some of the descriptions of Israel in the latter days the following call for notice.

In Deuteronomy xv. 6 we read :

"For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as He promised thee ; and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow ; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee."

The Jews certainly are a great money-lending and wealthy people, but the whole verse hardly applies to them since they

do not reign over many nations and they are, in fact, ruled over by many nations, ever since A.D. 70. The Anglo-Saxon race, however, does completely answer to this description, even as it does to every one of the other specifications concerning a nationally pardoned and redeemed Israel. This is repeated in Deuteronomy xxviii. 12.

Yet once again the nationally obedient people are to be high above all nations. Deuteronomy xxvi. 19 gives us God's purpose concerning them :

"To make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour ; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken."

The whole purpose of the blessings of the race is that it may be a holy people unto our God. The calling of Israel is indeed a high and holy calling. May the nation respond. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. What an incentive and encouragement to holiness of life !

CHAPTER VI
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CHAPTER VI

THE APPOINTED PLACE

IN the seventh chapter of 2 Samuel in verse 10, there occurs a very remarkable promise made by God to David. It is closely associated with another given in the context. Both were made on the same occasion, and there is an intimate connection between them. The first of them had to do with an Appointed Place, the second concerned David's House, his Kingdom and his Throne. They were to be "established for ever." It is with the former that we are now going to deal. This promise challenges investigation, and when thoroughly understood, stands out as of great importance. It is strange indeed how it is overlooked. Very many are unaware of its existence, whilst others pass it by unheeded, and never face its full meaning. It is always possible to make too much of an isolated passage, or to exaggerate the bounds of a prophetic promise, but never wise to entirely ignore it. A prophecy cannot be meaningless, and may be, on the other hand, one of first magnitude. A thorough understanding of this promise to David produces a radical revision of some preconceived notions concerning the Chosen Race of the seed of Abraham.

The words of this promise or prophecy are :

1. "Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel,
2. and will plant them,
3. that they may dwell in a place of their own,
4. and move no more :
5. neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more,
as aforetime."

The circumstances in which this mysterious promise was made were as follows. King David was contemplating the building of a temple for Jehovah. He mentioned the project to the prophet Nathan, who heartily approved of the king's

thought with the words, "Go, do all that is in thine heart : for the Lord is with thee." That very night, however, "the word of the Lord came to Nathan," and he was bidden to tell David that he was not to build this house of God, but that his son should do so. It is in this direct message from God to David that the two promises are enshrined.

The condition of the people at the time when this promise was made deserves close attention. David was at the zenith of his power and prosperity. His wars were mostly over, the tribes of ISRAEL were at rest from all their surrounding foes (see 2 Sam. vii. 1) : and they were living securely in the land promised to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is true they were not in possession of the whole extent as promised to Abraham, when God set the bounds "from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates," but they held all that was granted under the Mosaic Covenant ; and "the Lord had given him (David) rest round about him from all his enemies" (2 Sam. vii. 1). It was then at such a time and under such circumstances of prosperity that this strange and unexpected promise came. It must have sounded extraordinary in the ears of the king ; and it is doubtful if Nathan himself understood the import of the message more than he did.

1. To take the first clause, "Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel." What can it mean ? Were they not in their own place and home, in the land promised to their forefathers by Covenant and Oath ? And yet God says that at some future time He will definitely appoint a place for His people Israel ! What is this appointed place ? What land or country is it ? It is clear, beyond all doubt, that it does not refer to the Promised Land, for of that they were in actual occupation. Where then is this other land ? This new promise, of course, does not do away with the Covenant Promise of the Land ; that stands in all its integrity. This was something in addition, something extra, and guaranteed in the same way, even by the word of Jehovah.

2. Not only is He going to appoint a place for them, but He Himself "*will plant them*" there. There was nothing accidental or casual, nothing in the nature of a punishment,

but quite the reverse, it is clearly in the nature of a great blessing. Generally, when God spoke of planting His people, He referred either to Israel or to Judah in their punitive dispersion, and the planting invariably meant a planting of them back in the Promised Land. At this time they are neither in displeasure nor under punishment, but in the Land itself. The planting cannot therefore refer to the Promised Land.

3. This "place" was to be no temporary abode, but was to be their own possession, the terms of the promise being "*that they may dwell in a place of their own.*" Another place, their own as much as the Promised Land was.

4. Further, and this is the most remarkable point of all, it is to be a permanent home. The words are emphatic and cannot be misunderstood, "*that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more.*" This means an everlasting occupation. It means that they do not give it up, or ever leave it again, no, not even when they once more occupy the Promised Land. This is truly remarkable, so contrary to what we usually have thought and have been taught. We have always been taught that the Promised Land was the one and only ultimate and permanent home of God's people. But in the light of this forgotten and neglected prophecy we shall have to revise some of our ideas on the subject, if we are to be in line with God's revealed word. The usually accepted view is that all the Twelve Tribes will one day settle in Palestine and the surrounding larger Land of Promise. This view is wholly impossible, for the territory would be altogether too small to hold the chosen seed of Abraham. The promise concerning this seed was great multitudinousness. It was to become as the sand of the seashore, as the stars of heaven. It was to become "a Nation and a Commonwealth of Nations." Therefore this people could not all possibly crowd into the land. Furthermore the Scripture is explicit that, when the land comes into the occupation of the chosen race, the whole of the Twelve Tribes will not return to it, but that it will be representatively occupied. There will be gathered into it "one of a city and two of a family."

We are distinctly told by Zechariah that there will not be

room for them all, "and place shall not be found for them" (Zech. x. 6-10). One of the great Covenant Promises was that the seed should "spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south," and this, not in the way of punishment, but in victorious progress and honour. They were to be a great colonizing people. They were to inherit and cause to blossom the desolate places of the earth. Only a small portion of this prolific people could therefore live within the confines of the larger Land of Promise. It will indeed be in the possession of Israel and Judah, but it will not by any means contain them all. The whole even of the Jewish people will not return thither; while Israel in mass will remain in the Appointed Place and only representatively return to its ancient homeland, for God's word is that they shall "move no more."

5. This new "place" was to be a land of safety and security, "*neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as aforetime.*" These words imply that Israel was to have affliction in the future, but that ultimately they were to be gathered or planted in a certain country definitely chosen by God for them: where they were to be safe from affliction and persecution of their foes. Their sufferings and oppression were in due time to cease when they reached this safe abode or sanctuary. "Israel shall then dwell in safety alone" (Deut. xxxiii. 28).

From history we know that this has never been the position of the Jews (the people of the Kingdom of Judah). But the Jews were not and are not the whole of the Twelve Tribes. They were only a small portion of them. There was the northern kingdom, known in Scripture as "Israel," which was carried away captive by the Assyrians some 90 years before the Jews ceased to exist as the Kingdom of Judah. Israel was taken to the region south-west of the Caspian Sea. They never returned to Palestine when the Jews were restored under the edict of Cyrus. In fact we learn from the book of Esdras, in the Apocrypha, that they had started on their foretold migrations, and had passed out of Asia into Europe, into the land of Ar-Sareth, which is a region in the south-east of Europe. What happened to them then?

They are to-day spoken of as "The Lost Ten Tribes." Were they permanently lost? or absorbed by the surrounding races? or destroyed as a people and nation? God forbid, for in such a case His word and His Covenant Promises would have utterly failed, which is impossible. Let it be borne in mind that while the Scriptures draw a veil over the HISTORY of the captives of the Kingdom of Israel, the PROPHECIES are many and explicit concerning them. If God's word is true, they were by no means done for, or done with. The future of this captive nation is foretold, and is quite apart from that of the Jews. It was to be oppressed, to wander among the nations, to be given over to idolatry and to suffer sore chastisement for their great sins against God. But, and mark this well, their punishment was to have an end. They were not to be utterly destroyed or annihilated. God was to win them back to Himself again, and multiply them exceedingly: He was to re-betroth them unto Himself, and they were to become the "sons of the Living God." Their restoration and future glory are depicted in glowing colours, and all this apart from their union with Judah or the Jews. A future day will come when the two Houses, or Nations, will re-unite and will become one nation in the hand of God. The House of Judah is to walk to the House of Israel and they are to go up into the Promised Land and occupy it together for ever. The two sticks of the two Houses or Kingdoms are to become one stick in the hand of Jehovah (Ezek. xxxvii. 15, etc.).

Since this promise of the Appointed Place in no way fits in with all we know of the history of the Jews to the present day, for not one of the several items of the promise has been fulfilled to them, it is surely obvious that it must apply to the rest of the seed of Abraham who, in the times after Solomon, formed the Kingdom of Israel. God has never yet given the Jews an Appointed Place or land of their own for a permanent home, where they have been secure from oppression. The term "Israel" in this prophecy of Nathan, therefore, cannot be used in its widest sense of meaning the Twelve Tribes, but must be intended in its particular and special use as applied to the Ten Tribes, which were known

as "Israel" in contradistinction to Judah. This alone provides a reasonable meaning for the words, and explains what is otherwise enigmatic.

The distinction between "Israel" and "Judah" did not commence at the time of the Rending of the Kingdom after the death of Solomon. One had only to read the preceding chapters of the books of Samuel to realize that from the days of King Saul the distinction between Israel and Judah is most marked. The term "Israel," except in a few instances where it very obviously refers to the whole Twelve Tribes, is used of the tribes to the exclusion of Judah. This promise of God to David was given at a time when these terms "Israel" and "Judah" had meanings which were clear and distinctive, and became still more so during the long history of these separated peoples. The importance of bearing in mind the complete distinction between Israel and Judah is so great that no apology is needed for quoting at length the opinion of the late Professor Totten of Yale University. He wrote as follows :

"I can never be too thankful to the Almighty that in my youth He used the late Professor Wilson to show me the difference between the two Houses. The very understanding of this difference is the KEY by which almost the entire Bible becomes intelligible, and I cannot state too strongly that the man who has not yet seen that Israel of the Scripture is totally distinct from the Jewish people, is yet in the very infancy, the mere alphabet, of Biblical study, and that to this day the meaning of seven-eighths of the Bible is shut to his understanding."

Several of the prophets in their utterances clearly mark the difference between the two Houses, and they foretell a future different for each. They unanimously predict sore punishment on the Kingdom of Israel, but they also with one voice declare its eventual restoration to blessing and high favour.

We should expect to find in their utterances some allusion to this God-Appointed Place. As a matter of fact they do refer to a definite place of restoration. The descriptions given by them are such as to leave no doubt in the mind that

they all refer to the same place or country. Further they make it quite clear that the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel to God's favour is to take place before the final reunion of the two Houses to form one nation in the Promised Land. A study of their statements should throw some light on this divine announcement to David, and should enable us to locate this Appointed Place with no little certainty.

Let it clearly be understood that there are two distinct gatherings or restorations of Israel. The first is the gathering of Israel alone to the Appointed Place. The second, at a much later date, the gathering of Israel (as a mighty race) together with Judah to the Promised Land (Isa. xi. 11, 12).

"It shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people . . . and shall assemble the outcast of *Israel* and gather together the dispersed of *Judah* from the four corners of the earth."

What has Hosea to tell us concerning the first gathering or restoration of Israel? He prophesied ninety years before the main deportation of Israel to Assyria, and 183 years before the captivity of Judah. The prophecies of Hosea deal almost entirely with the northern kingdom of Israel, and not with Judah, except in a very few verses where any mistake is impossible. In chapter i. the terrible coming punishment is set forth under three heads:

1st. Jezreel (meaning, God scatters). "I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."

2nd. Lo-ruhamah (meaning, Not obtained mercy). "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel."

3rd. Lo-amini (meaning, Not my people). "Ye are not My People, and I will not be your God."

This fearful condemnation of Israel is immediately followed by glowing promises. They were to increase and multiply: and in the very place "where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people there shall it be said unto them, Ye are the *sons of the Living God*." What a change! What a restoration awaited Israel, nothing less than being re-covenanted under the New Covenant in Christ Jesus! When this stupendous change has taken place, and not till then, will the reunion of the two Houses be effected (Hosea i. 11).

"Then shall the children of *Judah* and the children of *Israel* be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land : for great shall be the day of Jezreel."

Note that the great multiplicity and the Christianizing of Israel is to take place before they were reunited with Judah and before they occupied the Promised Land. It is therefore impossible that Israel could have rejoined Judah, when the Jews were restored to the Land after the Babylonian Captivity. What "land" is referred to in the above verse ? Out of what land are Israel and Judah to be gathered ? It must be the land or lands in which Israel are to be found under the New Covenant as a Christian people.

THE WILDERNESS.

1. Hosea

In Hosea ii. the story of punishment and restoration is repeated. (Hosea ii. 14). Here we learn that the punishment will be followed by God luring Israel and bringing her "into the wilderness," and speaking comfortably unto her. Then a description of "the wilderness" follows, of the blessings that God will pour upon her there. God will "betroth" her to Himself for ever. What land or country is this "wilderness" ? It is where they are to come after their scattering ; it is to be a place of comfort and safety, of rest and blessing. It is surely the same place as that spoken of in our promise, the place which God will "appoint" for His people Israel.

The expression "wilderness" must not be understood to mean a sandy waste or arid desert. It is applicable to any great uncultivated and unpossessed land. It may be lonely tracts of virgin forest or fertile plain, such as North America or Australia was to the early Anglo-Saxon settlers in those lands : and such as these Islands of ours were in olden times. (See Cruden's definition of "wilderness.")

2. Jeremiah

In the book of Jeremiah, too, it is interesting to note the "wilderness" is mentioned as the place where the escaped

captives of Israel were to find rest, grace and favour (see Jer. xxxi. 1, 2).

"At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. Thus saith the Lord, the people that were left of the sword found grace in *the wilderness*; even Israel when I went to cause him to rest."

The words, "At the same time" point to the preceding verse, which fixes the period of the realization of this declaration by the expression "in the latter days." The "latter days," or as they are often called "the last days," are the time of the Gospel Dispensation. It is well at this point to recall the fact that :

1. The great Abrahamic Covenant Promises,
2. The prophetic Parables of Balaam concerning Israel,
3. The Blessings uttered by Moses on Israel,
4. The Fifth World Empire, the Stone Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream,

were all destined to be fulfilled *in the latter days*.

This passage from Jeremiah, with the verses that follow, is very similar to that in Hosea. The *wilderness* in each is obviously the same place: and, beyond all doubt, the reference is to the House of Israel and not to that of Judah.

3. Ezekiel

This *wilderness* moreover is spoken of by Ezekiel. To it God is to gather Israel after their wanderings and after His fury had been poured out upon them. And there He was to plead with them, purify them and cause them to know Him. (Ezek. xx. 33-37, etc.).

"As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you. And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand and with a stretched-out arm and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into *the wilderness* of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. . . . And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and *I will bring you into the bond of the covenant,*" etc.

How closely this resembles the luring into the wilderness as prophesied by Hosea and Jeremiah, the place of blessing

and restoration to God's favour, where they were to be recovenanted, brought into "the Bond of the Covenant!" The reference is to the house of Israel.

One hears it constantly asserted that "Israel is to be restored to the Promised Land in unbelief." Here we have an instance of the confusion that arises from failure to distinguish things that differ. If by "Israel" they only mean the Jews, they are perfectly correct. But if they mean the whole of the Twelve Tribes, they are quite mistaken. Judah, the Jews, will return to the Land in unbelief and be converted there, but Israel, the people of the Ten-Tribed kingdom, will return as a Christian people. The Bible is emphatic on this point. Before Israel is restored to the Land :

1. Hosea tells us that they are first to become the "sons of the Living God" (Hosea i. 10).

2. Jeremiah says that they shall first have "found grace in the wilderness" (Jer. xxxi. 2).

3. Ezekiel says that they are first to be brought into "the Bond of the Covenant" (Ezek. xx. 37).

4. Isaiah, too, bears the same testimony, as we shall see.

The Jews then are to be restored in unbelief, under the Old Mosaic Covenant ; Israel as a Christian people, under the New Covenant.

4. Isaiah

Isaiah also refers to "*the wilderness.*" After having foretold the first coming of Christ, he describes the restoration of Israel and speaks thus (Isa. xlii. 10-12) :

"Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from *the end of the earth*, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein : *the isles*, and the inhabitants thereof. Let *the wilderness* and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit : let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the *islands.*"

It is most remarkable that each of the four prophets has spoken of *the wilderness* as the place of blessing and marvellous restoration for Israel. It is evident that in each it must refer to one and the same place. It is clearly the Appointed

Place promised to David for Israel's future home. Up till now there has been no indication where this region is situated.

ISLANDS

1. Isaiah

For the first time, in the above verses, we get some clue, for we see that this wilderness is associated with *islands*. This is most important. It is no wild or fanciful idea. It is not an isolated or unsupported inference, but is strongly emphasized in other passages. Isaiah's prophetic references to the restoration of Israel in connection with islands are many and striking. What had Israel or Judah of old to do with islands? In the Old Testament times they were in no way connected with them. And of this much we are certain from subsequent history, that the Jews have had nothing to do with islands. These references can therefore by no means apply to the house of Judah. The only logical conclusion, therefore, is that they must refer to the house of Israel. Inference and surmise, however, are not necessary, for it is clearly stated that they are spoken directly to Israel, as the context plainly declares.

Take Isaiah xli. 1 :

"Keep silence before Me, *O islands* : and let the people renew their strength," etc.

It will be seen that the prophet in the end of the previous chapter has been addressing, not Judah, but Israel. The break into a new chapter is, of course, quite artificial and tends to break the continuity of thought. He addresses this people as living in islands. It is clear that it is in certain islands God will renew the strength of Israel. In the previous passages it was *the wilderness*, but here it is *islands*. What islands are these of which the prophet speaks? Are they the Ægean islands, or Cyprus, Crete, Malta, Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia or the British Isles? Is there any further light to help us to determine these islands?

In Isaiah xi. 11, we read of the gathering of Israel and Judah to the occupation of the Promised Land.

"And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt and from Pathros and from Cush and from Elam and from Shinar and from Hamath and from *the Islands of the sea*. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

We learn that from amongst the places from which Israel is finally to be gathered are "the islands of the sea."

(Note in passing that this never took place when the Jews were restored to Palestine under the edict of Cyrus : so that the reunion of the two houses of Israel and Judah did not take place at that time. Therefore the Jews to-day do not represent the Twelve Tribes of ISRAEL, but only the house of Judah, and the two houses are still to-day separate peoples.) Attention should be paid to the expression "*the islands of the sea*." Why put in "of the sea"? There are no other considerable islands than those in the seas. The same expression "isles of the sea" is found in Isaiah xxiv. 14-16 :

"They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in *the isles of the sea*. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous."

Why does the prophet speak of the "*isles of the sea*" ? It is a redundancy. Is this the correct rendering of the Hebrew ? The words "sea" and "west" are generally the translation of the same word in the Hebrew Bible. So that it would be a correct translation to say "*isles of the west*." This is important, for it eliminates all the islands of the Mediterranean. The isles or islands of the west could only be the Isles of Tarshish or the British Isles of to-day. Notice the last clause of the verse, it speaks of the "uttermost part of the earth." Where was this region ? These Isles of the West were in those days the uttermost part of the earth, nothing farther west was known. In these islands then Israel was to "glorify the Lord, even the name of the God of Israel." The verse further indicates that they were to be a maritime people.

The same points will be seen in Isaiah xlii. 10, which has been quoted already without comment.

"Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein : the *isles* and the inhabitants thereof."

A maritime people, living in islands, at the end of the earth, glorifying God. Such was Israel to be.

In Isaiah xlix. 1, we read :

"Listen, *O isles*, unto Me and hearken ye people *from afar* : the Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of my name . . . and said unto me, thou art My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

Here again is Israel connected with islands. These isles and people were "from afar." Such is not the description of the Mediterranean islands, but of the far-off British Isles. It is there that God is glorified in Israel. See verse 12 of the same chapter, referring to the return of Israel from the isles to Palestine :

"Behold these shall come *from afar* : and lo these from the *north* and from the *west* : and these from the land of Sinim."

It is again repeated that it was "from far," and now the situation is clearly indicated, the north-west. The British Isles are the only ones that are far to the north-west of Palestine.

In Hebrew there is no one word for north-west, it has to be expressed by the words "the north and the west."

Dr. Abbadie of Amsterdam stated, "Unless the Ten Tribes have flown into the air, or have been plunged to the centres of the earth, they must be sought for in the north and west and in the British Isles."

In Isaiah lix. 18 :

"According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to His enemies ; to *the islands* He will repay recompense. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

In Isaiah lx. 9, we have the following :

"Surely *the isles* shall wait for Me, and the ships of Tarshish first to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God and to the Holy One of Israel, because He hath glorified thee."

We again have islands, they are to wait upon God. They are evidently the far-off isles of Tarshish, and the people in them are a great maritime race. It is the ships of the British Isles that are to carry God's people back to the Promised Land.

These references are sufficient to show that these islands are the God-Appointed Place for Israel.

2. Jeremiah

Isaiah, however, is not the only prophet who speaks of this people as being in the isles. Just as Isaiah connected "the wilderness" and "islands" together (see above, Isa. xlii. 10-12) so does Jeremiah connect the two in chapter xxxi. In that very chapter in which he speaks of "the wilderness" as the place of Israel's restoration and blessing, he also refers to these islands (Jer. xxxi. 10) :

"Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in *the isles afar off*, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he."

The subsequent verses speak of abundant blessing. Here we have a glowing description of Israel's gathering to what certainly is the Appointed Place. This message was not for Judah, because the preceding verse says, "I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first born," meaning the Ten-Tribed kingdom only. These isles also are "afar off," clearly, therefore, not those in the Mediterranean, but some islands much farther off. They can only be the British Isles. The Jews have never been gathered as a people to any isles, and been kept as a flock in security, and crowned with blessings as depicted in this chapter. It cannot be made to apply to them in any way.

There is yet another and earlier reference by Jeremiah to

these islands describing some prior event. When God commanded Jeremiah (xxv. 15) :

"Take the wine cup of this fury at My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it."

Amongst these many nations were the following, verse 22 : "All the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of *the isles which are beyond the sea.*" Whoever these kings may have been, there is no doubt as to which islands are here meant, for they are "beyond the sea," namely beyond the Mediterranean Sea, and these can only be the British Isles, the same islands as in the above quotations.

Even apart from the specific statements that enable us to identify the islands mentioned by the prophets, it is obvious that none of the islands of the Mediterranean are of sufficient size to be a home for a people that is to become "a great and mighty nation." The only islands, within the limit of Bible geography, sufficient for an expanding population, were the British Isles. None of the other islands afford such wonderful ports and harbours suitable for a great maritime people. Apart from direct Scripture teaching this is sufficiently manifest. Needless to point out that none of the inhabitants of the Mediterranean islands have possessed the blessings here foretold. But those of the British Isles have.

Those who oppose the views here set forth are very insistent that the word "isles" or "islands" in the Bible must be translated or only mean "coast-lands" or "sea-coasts." The question then arises : If the inspired writers really meant islands, how else could they have expressed themselves ?

The evidence seems overwhelming that "the wilderness" and "the islands" are the same place, also that they are the land or country of which God spoke when He said to David, "I will appoint a place for My people Israel." It is in these British Isles, called by ancient writers "the Isles of the Blessed," that redeemed and recovenanted Israel is to have "a place of their own, and move no more."

It is impossible at this point to refrain from reference to the twelfth chapter of the Revelation. The parallelism is

most striking, so much so, that it is hard to conceive that it does not refer to the same matter. It tells of a "wonder," a Woman, clothed with the Sun, travails in birth and brings forth a man child, who is destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. A red Dragon waits to devour this child, but the new-born babe is miraculously "caught up unto God and to *his throne*." Then in verse 6 :

"And the woman fled into *the wilderness*, where she hath a *place prepared of God*, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days."

Here we have the Wilderness and a Prepared Place, both being the same region. The wilderness may well be that mentioned by the prophets, while the "Place prepared of God" reads exactly like God's words to David, "I will appoint a place for My people Israel." Verse 14 also again mentions them :

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into *the wilderness*, into *her place*, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

Here once more we have the wilderness and the Prepared Place. There is no indication that this place is the isles of the west. The fact that the woman is taken there by the wings of a great eagle may be figurative of voyaging thither by ship across the sea.

Israel after their carrying away into Assyria was lost to the world, yea, they lost the knowledge of their own origin. They lost their name and their language as foretold by God. They were divorced from God, that is, they were uncovenanted, and lost even the sign of circumcision, and became a gentilized race. After centuries of migration across Europe, the tribes at length were gathered into these islands in the invasions of the Northmen : the Angles, the Saxons, the Jutes, the Danes and the Normans. Here in these islands girt about by the sea and entirely cut off from the great continent, they were safe and secure from their foes, enjoying to the full God's gracious promise to David, "neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as beforetime." Such is "England, hedged in with

the main, secure and confident from foreign purposes." They dwelt alone and separate as prophesied by Balaam, who spoke under the compulsion of God's Holy Spirit (Num. xxiii. 9) and also as foretold by Moses, "Israel shall dwell in safety alone" (Deut. xxxiii. 28). Here they renewed their strength, became a Christian nation, and were brought under the bond of the Covenant through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the Redeemer of Israel. Here in these "latter days" they have multiplied exceedingly, expanding and overspreading the earth, as foretold to Jacob, Genesis xxviii. 14, "to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south." In fulfilment of the Covenant Promises they have become "a nation and a company of nations," enjoying marvellous prosperity and wealth: possessing the great maritime supremacy that was bestowed upon Joseph (and not upon Judah) in the Covenant of the Deep. What better place could God have appointed for Israel where the great Promises could have materialized? Israel has become "the fullness of the Gentile Nations" as was predicted of Ephraim. Israel is now a race that is bringing the blessings of liberty and justice to all peoples whom God has given to their dominion. They are spreading God's Word and preaching the glorious Gospel throughout the whole world, so that in this sense also God is keeping His promise to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." In a word, in the Anglo-Saxon Race are being fulfilled the marvellous Covenant Promises made to Abraham (with the exception of those specifically bestowed upon Judah) and the Birthright given to Joseph's seed. This race is only at the beginning of things, the future is dazzling with splendour. The Covenant-keeping Jehovah is working out His great age-long purposes, He hath ever been mindful of His Covenant. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people.

CHAPTER VII
THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

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CHAPTER VII

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

GOD has been graciously pleased to make four Covenants with Abraham and his seed.

1. *The Abrahamic Covenant :*

This contains the Promises made to the Fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and his twelve sons.

2. *The Mosaic Covenant :*

This was made in Horeb at Sinai with the children of ISRAEL, the twelve tribes.

3. *The Davidic Covenant :*

This is the subject of the present chapter. Concerning the throne and dynasty of David.

4. *The New Covenant :*

This New Covenant was made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah for the blessing of all nations.

The occasion of the Davidic Covenant was when the king contemplated building a temple for God in Jerusalem. He informed the prophet Nathan of his intention, which met with his hearty concurrence. That night, however, God intimated to the prophet that David was not to carry out this project, but that it should be executed by his son. He was commissioned to inform David of God's will in the matter and at the same time was the bearer of two very great and gracious promises to him. The first was that of an Appointed Place for Israel, and the second of these was a promise concerning the House and Dynasty of David. There is undoubtedly a very close and intimate connection between the two. It is the second of these that forms the subject of our present study.

David had expressed his earnest desire to build a house

for God, but, while this desire was not granted to him, God informed David that He would build him a sure house.

God's promise concerned the perpetuity of David's House, Throne and Kingdom—what did this exactly mean? It meant that David's seed should perpetually reign in Israel. It will be remembered that when Jacob gave blessings to his twelve sons before his death (Gen. xlix.), he chose his two sons Judah and Joseph to receive blessings far above their brethren. On Joseph was conferred the Birthright, and on Judah the great Messianic promise and the blessing of the Sceptre :

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come" (Gen. xlix. 10).

Israel's kings were to be of Judah's tribe without cessation until the coming of the reigning Messiah.

The precise meaning of the promise to David will be found by reference to :

2 Chron. vi. 16 : "There shall not fail thee a man in My sight to sit upon the throne of Israel."

2 Chron. vii. 18 : "There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel."

Jer. xxxiii. 17 : "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel."

In the announcement made by Nathan the prophet to the king the promise is not spoken of as a Covenant, but that it was indeed such is abundantly clear from the many Scripture references to it—thus :

2 Chron. vii. 18 : "As I have *covenanted* with David."

2 Chron. xiii. 5 : "A *covenant* of salt."

While in Psalm lxxxix. it is repeated many times :

Verse 3 : "I have made a *covenant* with My chosen."

Verse 28 : "My *covenant* shall stand with him."

Verse 34 : "My *covenant* will I not break."

Jer. xxxiii. 21 : "My *covenant* . . . with David."

The promises given to Abraham were by Covenant and Oath, and the one given to David was confirmed in the same way.

That it was on oath is seen in Psalm lxxxix.

Verse 3 : "I have *sworn* unto David My servant."

Verse 35 : "Once have I *sworn* by My holiness ; I will not lie unto David" (R.V.).

Also on the day of Pentecost Peter in his sermon mentions it, Acts ii. 30 (R.V.) :

"that God had *sworn* with an *oath* to him, that the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne."

It was truly a very great and far-reaching promise. The chances, humanly speaking, of its continuance were small indeed if it were a conditional promise. It is of the utmost importance to determine whether this Covenant was conditional or unconditional. Everything turns on this question. Did it really mean that, whether he was a good man or bad one, some descendant of David should always reign over Israel, or was it only that if they were good men the line of succession should never cease ? If it were merely a Conditional Covenant (let it be reverently said) there would not be much in it. It would be of little value, for the first evil king of David's seed would absolutely cancel the promise and release God from all obligation in the matter. If indeed it were the nature of a contract, the moment a king disobeyed and broke God's commandments and statutes the Covenant would be annulled. The likelihood of a succession of God-fearing kings was so remote that there would have been little chance of the promise standing for many years. As a matter of fact, Solomon, the very next king, was a failure. Did the Covenant cease with him ? Was the promise then cancelled ? So much depends on whether it was conditional or unconditional that it behoves us to examine the subject closely. The question cannot be answered offhand by reference to a single passage ; all the passages must be examined as a whole. There are many references to it in the Scriptures :

1. There is the announcement of it to David.
2. There is David's response to it.
3. It is referred to by David in his speech at the dedication of treasure for the temple building.
4. David again returns to the subject in his charge to Solomon.
5. The last words of David.

6. Solomon in his prayer to God reverts to it.
7. God repeats it in His answer to Solomon.
8. It is involved in utterances foretelling the rending of the kingdom.
9. Abijah, king of Judah, refers to it in his speech to the armies of Israel.
10. Psalm lxxxix. deals at length with the topic.
11. Jeremiah in the last days of the kings of Judah speaks very emphatically about it.

I. THE PROMISE AS MADE TO DAVID.

This is given in the books of 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles. To make the comparison of both easy, the passages are sub-joined in parallel columns.

2 Sam. vii. 11-16 (R.V.)

Moreover the Lord telleth thee that the Lord will make thee an house.

When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels; and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build an house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

I will be his father, and he shall be My son.

If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

1 Chron. xvii. 10-14 (R.V.)

Moreover I tell thee that the Lord will build thee an house.

And it shall come to pass, when thy days be fulfilled that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build Me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever.

I will be his father, and he shall be My son: and I will not.

take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee: but I will settle him in Mine house and in My kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for ever.

Here we have a promise concerning David's "house," "kingdom," and "throne." In passing, note that God speaks of the kingdom as "*My kingdom*." God's kingdom on earth always was, is and will be, the Kingdom of Israel and no other. The Promise is that the house, kingdom and throne are to be "established *for ever*." There was nothing conditional about it. There were no two contracting parties to the Covenant, it was an outright, one-sided promise to David and his seed on God's part. Was it conditional on the good behaviour of the seed? If the seed "commit iniquity" would the promise cease? No, it would not. No contingency would or could arise that had not been foreseen. God in His Covenant had made provision for every conceivable emergency, nothing could happen that had not been contemplated and provided for; the case had been considered to the uttermost. God promised to chasten the disobedient king with the rod and the stripes of men, but His mercy was not to depart from him, God definitely stated once and for all that He would not deal with him as He did with Saul, whom He displaced, and whose royal house He terminated by giving the throne and kingdom to another seed and dynasty. He would certainly punish the royal seed of David, but He would not put it aside for another line of monarchs, for the house, kingdom and throne were established *for ever*. The Covenant was wholly Unconditional.

2. DAVID'S RESPONSE.

David's own personal view of the magnitude of the promise, and his unworthiness of it, is made evident by the following references:

2 Sam. vii. 18-29 (R.V.)

Then David the king went in and sat before the Lord ;
and he said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me thus far ?

And this was yet a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord God :

1 Chron. xvii. 16-27 (R.V.)

Then David the king went in and sat before the Lord ;
and he said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me thus far ?

And this was a small thing in Thine eyes, O God ;

but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come ;
and this too after the manner of men, O Lord God !

And, what can David say more unto Thee ?

for Thou knowest Thy servant, O Lord God.

For Thy word's sake, and according to Thine own heart, hast thou wrought all this greatness, to make Thy servant know it.

And now, O Lord God, the word that Thou hast spoken, concerning Thy servant and concerning his house, confirm Thou it for ever, and do as Thou hast spoken.

And let Thy Name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of Hosts is God over Israel :

and the house of Thy servant David shall be established for ever before Thee.

For Thou, O Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, hast revealed to Thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house : therefore hath Thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

And now, O Lord God, Thou art God, and Thy words are all truth, and Thou hast promised this good thing unto Thy servant :

Now therefore let it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee : for Thou O

but thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come ;
and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.

What can David say yet more unto Thee concerning the honour which is done to thy servant ?
for Thou knowest Thy servant, O Lord,

for Thy servant's sake, and according to Thine own heart, hast Thou wrought all this greatness, to make known all these great things.

And now, O Lord, let the word that Thou hast spoken, concerning Thy servant and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as Thou hast spoken.

And let Thy Name be established and magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of Hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel :

and the house of David Thy servant is established before Thee.

For Thou, O my God,

hast revealed to Thy servant, that Thou wilt build him an house : therefore hath Thy servant found in his heart to pray before Thee.

And now, O Lord, Thou art God,

and hast promised this good thing unto Thy servant :

And now it hath pleased Thee to bless the house of Thy servant,

Lord God, hast spoken it, and with Thy blessing let the house of Thy servant be blessed for ever.	that it may continue for ever before Thee: for Thou, O Lord, hast blessed, and it is blessed for ever.
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David was quite overwhelmed with the greatness of the blessing. He repaired at once to the house of the Lord, to the tabernacle, and there poured out his heart in adoring wonder and praise. God had spoken of his house "for a great while to come." This is an indefinite period of time, but the frequent recurrence of "for ever" in the passage precludes that it merely covered the time to Zedekiah, the last of Judah's kings. David could only utter a grateful "Amen" to God's promise, and pray that God would establish His word, "that it may continue for ever before Thee, for Thou, Lord, hast spoken it." David certainly took the promise to be perpetual and unconditional. We have before us a case of Election and Predestination pure and simple.

In the Abrahamic Covenant there was the *Election of a Race*, namely the seed of Abraham, "the children of The Promise."

In Genesis xlix. there was the *Election of a Tribe* of this elect race, Judah, to supply the Royal Dynasty for Israel.

In this Davidic Covenant we have the *Election of the Royal House of Dynasty* from the elect regal tribe of Judah to rule over Israel. In this Covenant is found the Divine Right of Kings. There is no other divine right of kings for the nations of the world, for God has elected no other perpetual dynasty for any of the nations. The wording of the Covenant altogether precludes the possibility of giving it a purely spiritualizing interpretation. It refers to no spiritual seed, but to David's lineal descendants of flesh and blood.

Attention should be called to one matter that David mentioned on this occasion. Speaking of ISRAEL he said (1 Chron. xvii. 21, 22):

"And what one nation in the earth is like Thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem unto Himself for a people, to make thee a name by great and terrible things; in driving out nations from before Thy people which Thou redeemedst out of Egypt? For Thy people

Israel dost Thou make Thine own people for ever ; and Thou, Lord becamest their God."

These are remarkable words, full of deep import.

"What one nation in the earth is like Thy people Israel ? " The answer of course is, "There is no other nation like it." In the words of Psalm cxlvii. 20 : "He hath not dealt so with any nation." None of them can be compared or reckoned with ISRAEL. God never treated any other nation thus. ISRAEL was a God-made nation and, hence, was unique on earth, it differed from all others. It cannot be reckoned among the nations. It was like the Stone Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, "cut out without hands" (Dan. ii. 45).

The marginal rendering here is interesting.

"And who is like Thy people Israel, *a nation that is alone in the earth ?*" etc.

This helps us to understand in what sense Balaam spoke when in his first Parable he said (Num. xxiii. 9) :

"Lo, the people *shall dwell alone* and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

Also what Moses meant in those words at the close of his blessing the Twelve Tribes in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 28 :

"Israel shall then dwell in safety alone."

ISRAEL dwelling among other nations on earth could not, for the reasons given here by David, be reckoned among the nations, but was unique and stood alone.

3. AT THE DEDICATION OF TREASURE FOR TEMPLE BUILDING

David, having been forbidden to build a temple, made ample provision of material and treasure for the building of it by his son. On the occasion of the dedication of all the treasure he made a speech before all the nobles and leaders of the people (1 Chron. xxviii. 2) :

"Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren and my people : As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building : But God

said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for My name, because thou has been a man of war, and hast shed blood. Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever : for He hath chosen Judah to be the ruler ; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father ; and among the sons of my father he liked me, to make me king over all Israel : And of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons) He hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. And He said unto me, Solomon, thy son, he shall build My house and My courts ; for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father. Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do My commandments and My judgments, as at this day."

Before passing to our main theme, observe that the throne is "*the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord* over Israel." The only kingdom of God upon this earth is that of ISRAEL. He has no other earthly kingdom. It is over this kingdom that the Son of God will one day rule in bodily presence, for be it remembered that (Luke i. 32, 33) :

"... the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David ; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

Also note the words, "He hath chosen Judah to be ruler." This is a reference to Jacob's words already quoted above, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah," etc. It reminds us of the verse in 1 Chronicles v. 2 :

"For Judah prevailed above his brethren *and of him came the prince*, but the Birthright was Joseph's."

"He hath chosen Judah to be ruler" is a repetition of the previous Election of the Tribe, while the words that follow state the Election of a Royal House in that elect tribe.

Hitherto we have seen that the Covenant was unmistakably Unconditional, and that it was so understood and accepted by David ; but in this present passage is not doubt raised on this point ? The last clause reads :

"Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever, *if he be constant to do My commandments and My judgments, as at this day.*"

Does not this read as if it were conditional ? Regarding Solomon's kingdom, it was to be *for ever, if he were constant* ; and yet in a few lines above we read :

"Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel *for ever*."

A statement which points to a dynasty perpetual, and therefore Unconditional. It is not easy to reconcile the two propositions. Solomon in his later days sinned grievously and made God "angry" (1 Kings xi. 9). Are we to take it that the Covenant came therefore to an end? All we know is that, though He chastened Solomon for his sins, God did not remove the dynasty of David on that account as He did that of Saul. The same remark also applies to the later kings of Judah who committed iniquity. It therefore seems obvious that the Covenant was Unconditional.

4. DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON

1 Kings ii. 3: ". . . that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: that the Lord may continue His word which He spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said He) a man on the throne of Israel."

This does certainly read as if the promise were entirely Conditional. "If thy children take heed to their way" is conditional. But once again the defection of Solomon and other kings did not lead to the suppression of the dynasty.

5. DAVID'S LAST WORDS

2 Sam. xxiii. 5: "Although my house be not so with God: yet He hath made with me an *Everlasting Covenant* ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow."

In spite of all the imperfections of his house, of which he is fully conscious, David knows that the Covenant is "everlasting" and "sure."

6. SOLOMON'S DEDICATORY PRAYER

This is found in 1 Kings viii. and 2 Chronicles vi. The two passages are practically identical in their wording, therefore the verses in Kings only, bearing on our topic, are subjoined (1 Kings viii. 23-26):

"Lord God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, Who keepest Covenant and mercy with Thy servants that walk before Thee with all their heart, Who hast kept with Thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst him : Thou spakest also with Thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with Thy hand, as it is this day. Therefore now, O Lord God of Israel, keep with Thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in My sight to sit on the throne of Israel, so *that thy children take heed to their way*, that they walk before Me as thou hast walked before Me. And now, O God of Israel, let Thy word, I pray Thee, be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David my father."

Here again it would read as though the promise were conditional : "There shall not fail thee a man in My sight to sit on the throne of Israel, *so that thy children take heed to their way.*" It reads as if the promise entirely depended on the obedience of David's seed.

7. GOD'S RESPONSE TO SOLOMON

What did God say to Solomon in answer to his prayer on this subject ? (2 Chron. vii. 17-20) :

"And as for thee, *if* thou wilt walk before Me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe My statutes and My judgments ; *then* I will stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel. But if ye turn away, and forsake My statutes and My commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them ; then will I pluck them up by the roots out of My land which I have given them," etc.

Here it reads entirely as if the Covenant were conditional on the obedience of the seed : "If thou wilt," "then I will" establish "as I have covenanted with David."

The first half of this passage refers to Solomon, as shown by the use of the pronouns "thou" and "thy" in the singular, while the second half of it refers to the people since the pronouns are plural, "ye" and "you." God would pluck the people up by the roots out of the land. The nation was soon to be divided into two nations, both of which were eventually plucked up out of the land ("My Land," God calls it). Now if this Covenant were unconditional, what

is the position ? The house of David would have to continue to rule over at least some part of them in order that God's word might stand true. The history of the house of Judah and Benjamin, the Jews, is perfectly well known to the world. They were plucked up out of the Land and suffered seventy years' captivity in Babylon, then were restored and occupied Palestine till some forty years after the first coming of the Messiah to suffer and to die. They were then plucked up by the roots and cast out of the Land. Since that day their history has been an open page for all to read, and it is beyond all doubt that no king of David's line ever ruled over the Jews after Zedekiah.

On the other hand the history of the other nation of the promised seed of Abraham, Israel, the northern kingdom of the Ten Tribes, is not known to the world. The Scriptures tell us they were plucked up and transported into northern Assyria some ninety years before the Jews went to Babylon. That the Ten Tribes did not return with their brethren the Jews at the edict of Cyrus is beyond all dispute upon the evidence of the Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the historian Josephus. The Apocrypha tells us that the main body of these captives in Assyria passed out of Asia into Europe. This migration took place while the kingdom of Judah was still in existence, and years before it was carried off to Babylon. If this Davidic Covenant be unconditional there must have been kings of the Elect Royal House of this Elect Tribe reigning somewhere over some section of the Elect Race. Over that section known as the Jews it is evident that David's line did not reign.

8. THE PREDICTION CONCERNING THE RENDING OF THE KINGDOM

When God foretold Solomon that He would rend "the kingdom" from him, but for David's sake He would not take it out of his hand, but from his son's hand, God further modified this statement by saying that He would not rend "*the whole* of the kingdom" from the seed of David, but would give the Royal seed "one tribe" for David's sake and for

Jerusalem's sake. For David's sake because God had covenanted that his seed should rule over *Israel*. Hence "one tribe" of "the kingdom," Benjamin, was given to the house of David. Judah, for some reason, was not counted in "the kingdom." This large subject will be dealt with in the next chapter.

9. ABIJAH'S REFERENCE TO THIS COVENANT

In 2 Chronicles xiii. 4-5, Abijah, the King of Judah, speaking to the opposing armies of Israel, said :

"Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel : Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave *the kingdom* over Israel to David *for ever*, even to him and to his sons by a Covenant of salt ?"

This godly king of Judah understood that God's Covenant with David was unconditional. "The kingdom over Israel" had been given to David's seed for all time. When he spoke Abijah was not only king over the tribe of Judah but also over "the one tribe" taken from Israel and given to the seed of David. Benjamin, representing "the kingdom," was under the rule of the sons of David at least till Zedekiah's time.

10. THE DAVIDIC COVENANT IN PSALM LXXXIX

Practically the whole of this Psalm is taken up with God's Covenant with David. The keynote of the Psalm is found in the word "faithfulness" (verses 1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33). God's faithfulness to His promises and Covenant is its theme, and it concentrates upon this particular Covenant promise with David. In verses 3, 4 :

"I have made *a Covenant* with My chosen, I have *sworn* unto David My servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

Here the Covenant and Oath are stated. David's seed is to be established by God "for ever." The words are "for ever," not for so many centuries or merely for "a great while to come." It is to be in perpetuity. There can be no mistaking the meaning here. The next phrase makes it still more striking. God will build up David's throne "to all generations," that is from one generation to another, and admits

of no abeyance or hiatus in any generation. The sceptre indeed was not to depart from Judah till Shiloh comes to reign. Our glorious Shiloh too is of the house and lineage of David. Whatever doubt may have been suggested in some of the previous passages there is no question or doubt here that the Covenant was unconditional, even as it was in the first announcement to David. "It cannot be cancelled or altered, but is an eternal verity resting on the veracity of One Who cannot lie." Isaiah referring to it speaks of it as "the *Sure Mercies of David*" (Isa. lv. 3) :

"And I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

In verses 28 and 29 of this Psalm :

"My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and My Covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever and his throne as the days of heaven."

The Covenant is to "stand fast" and the mercy is "for evermore." There is to be no cessation of it. Above, God was to "establish for ever" the seed, here it is "to endure for ever." A perpetual throne and an ever-enduring seed were the substance of the promise. God will make this throne "as the days of heaven." When days cease then shall this throne cease and not till then. Men stagger at this promise through unbelief.

The verses that follow this passage deal with the contingency of the seed forsaking the law and breaking the statutes (verses 30, 31) :

"If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments ; if they break My statutes and keep not My commandments. . . ."

What was to happen in such a case ? (verse 32) :

"Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes."

These are the very expressions that are found in the original announcement of the Covenant by Nathan. We are assured that there would be severe chastisement, but the point to be made clear is, what happens to the Covenant ? Is it made void or annulled ? See verses 33-37 :

"Nevertheless My loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail (or margin—"to lie").

"My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall *endure for ever*, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be *established for ever* as the moon and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."

This absolutely settles the question. In spite of disobedience and rebellion the throne and the royal dynasty was not to cease. They do not end as did those of Saul. The individual monarch might be cast out, deposed, or otherwise punished, nevertheless another of David's line should be found to carry on the unbroken succession. The throne was to be as sure and steadfast as the sun : it was to be as lasting as the moon. The kingdom might wax and wane, but it should endure so long as the moon pursued her destined course. Since sun and moon continue to this day, the only logical conclusion is that David's throne and seed must be co-existent. History shows it did not exist among the Jews after the days of Zedekiah, which would look as if the promise had failed and the Covenant had been broken. Note that even in the Psalmist's day it looked to him as if this were so ; but we know full well that it was not. See what he said, hear his lament in the next verses. How soon does man begin to doubt God ! (verses 38, 39) :

"But Thou hast cast off and abhorred, Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed. *Thou hast made void the Covenant* of Thy servant : Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground," etc.

He was quite wrong, the Covenant was not then broken. David's seed still reigned, and was not put away : there had been no disannulling of the sacred compact. Unbelief is still ever the failing of God's people. "The Treasury of David" is very clear and emphatic on the unconditional character of the Davidic Covenant in this Psalm.

God has not "made void the Covenant." Distress and doubt in this connection entirely arises from the prevalent misconception that the Jews are the only existing representatives of the children of *The Promise*, of Abraham's seed. The Israel of the Ten-Tribed Kingdom is overlooked and

entirely ignored, while all the time this Davidic Covenant has stood true in its divine integrity ever since the days of Zedekiah. God's promise has never failed, nor did He "lie to David." What He swore by His Holiness was absolutely carried out to the letter.

Before leaving this Plsam to further prosecute our study, suffer a digression, see verse 25 :

"I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers."

What does this mean? Surely it implies Sea Power, Maritime Supremacy. The Royal Seed of David was to have sea dominion. This power is to be given it of the Lord, and it is to be abiding : so we understand the words, "I will set." The race of which they are the kings are to be a maritime people. The Jews have never been a seafaring people. It must therefore refer to the other branch of Abraham's seed, Israel of the Ten Tribes. This promise is a development of the so-called "Naval Covenant" blessing which was bestowed, not upon Judah, but with the Birthright upon Joseph (Gen. xlix. 25) in the words, "Blessings of the deep that lieth under." In the Blessing by Moses, the two tribes of Joseph received the Blessing of "the deep that coucheth beneath" (Deut. xxxiii. 13). In the Parables of Balaam the promise was "his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted" (Num. xxiv. 7). It is not the Jews but Israel who in the latter days is to be a maritime race.

Israel was to enjoy these blessings in "the latter days." Where is there this race in present times? The Anglo-Saxon Race alone enjoys this oft-promised blessing.

II. JEREMIAH ON THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

We have now come to the last of the passages on this Promise on Oath to David (Jeremiah xxxiii. 17).

Here is God's last word on the Davidic Covenant. It was uttered centuries after the Promise was first made. The terms of the Covenant were not abated by one jot or tittle with the lapse of centuries or with the lapse of the seed. In spite of all the disobedience and failure of the Davidic

kings, it was restated in all its integrity and vigour, clearly indicating the everlasting nature of the Covenant :

“For thus saith the Lord ; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel.”

The statement is important enough in itself, but its import is enhanced tenfold when we pause to realize the time and occasion of its utterance. It seems to gather force and wonder, and reveals the heroic courage of the prophet in delivering such a message at such a time. When was it spoken ?

The prophet uttered this astounding word in the reign of the last of Judah's kings. The last king of David's dynasty to rule *in Judah* was on the throne. His days were numbered ; it was the eleventh hour of Judah's day as a kingdom. The divine word had gone forth that Jerusalem was to fall and be destroyed by the Chaldeans. At this very time the Chaldeans had invaded the land and were actually besieging the holy city. Jeremiah had long before been the herald of God's coming judgment on the king, the city and the people. He had already foretold that they were to be cast out of the Land and be in captivity for seventy years, and yet in this the nation's darkest hour he gave forth this seemingly utterly impracticable word of Jehovah. What courage he had ! What a man of faith in God and in the inviolability of God's promise ! “Thus saith the Lord,” this was enough for him, “David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of *Israel*.” Carefully note where the throne is to be. God does not say over the “house of Judah,” the Jews. Hitherto the kings of this dynasty had ruled over that kingdom, i.e. the tribes of Judah and Benjamin with the Levites. Now they are to sit upon the throne of the “house of Israel,” obviously in clear contradistinction to the “house of Judah.” This distinction needs to be clearly understood. When Jeremiah speaks here of the house of Israel he means the Ten-Tribed Kingdom.

At this period the house of Israel had already ceased to exist as a kingdom for some one hundred and thirty-three years at least, yet observe how persistently unconditional is the statement of the Covenant.

The next three verses of this passage (verses 19-22) are :

“And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord ; If ye can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season ; then may also My Covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne ; and with the Levites the priests, My ministers.

“As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David My servant, and the Levites that minister unto Me.”

Once more the Covenant is reiterated. It closely resembles the passage in Psalm lxxxix. in its appeal to the witness of day and night. How sure and lasting it is : “If ye can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night . . . then also may My Covenant be broken with David.” Since days and nights continue in their season, the only logical conclusion is that the Davidic Covenant must have held good and must be in continuance to-day. There was nothing conditional in the statement, it was wholly independent of the action of the seed. This was no timid announcement, the repetition of it was singular and significant. Even now the prophet had not finished with it. God commanded him yet again to utter it, verses 23-26 :

“Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the Lord hath chosen, He hath even cast them off ? Thus they have despised My people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

“Thus saith the Lord, If My covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth ; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob : for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.”

The perpetuity of the Race and the perpetuity of the Dynasty were assured. It did really look at that time as if the Lord were utterly casting away His people when they went to their captivity, but not so. They are spoken of as “the two families whom the Lord hath chosen.” Each was separate and distinct in the mind and purpose of God, and it were well that we should think in harmony with His

revelation. Israel had long since gone into Assyria and the main body had passed out of Asia into Europe, while Judah was in the last throes of the dissolution as a kingdom. Nevertheless, said Jehovah, only when days and nights ceased, and only when heaven and earth passed away would He utterly cast these two elect families away. How could God have stated more forcibly the continual existence of these two peoples, Israel and Judah? And yet some are inclined to think that Israel was irrevocably lost, and was never to become what God had foreordained. While others who reject such a view as this would fain see in the Jews both the two families whom the Lord hath chosen, but thus in effect making void the great Abrahamic Covenant Promises, which were not awaiting the Millennial Age for their fulfilment, but which were destined for "the latter days."

Just as the perpetual existence of Israel and Judah is assured till the day when God will make them one nation again, so does God here similarly speak of David's Dynasty. Not till days and nights cease will He cast away David, so that He will "not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." How could the perpetuity of David's dynasty be more forcibly or more unconditionally stated?

Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost referred to the immutability of the Davidic Covenant (Acts ii. 30, 31):

"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had *sworn with an oath* to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne (or R.V., He would set one upon his throne), He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption."

Peter, while maintaining that Christ was of the house and lineage of David, did not suggest that our Lord sat on the throne of David, and reigned over the house of Jacob, but shows that it is the *risen* Christ Who is one day so to reign. The Covenant will surely have its consummation when He comes to take the kingdom.

When the two houses of Israel and Judah are one day

reunited into one nation, as foretold, then David, David's seed, will be reigning over them (Ezek. xxxvii. 22 and 25), but in the meantime he rules over Israel alone.

The suggestion has been made that in spite of the strongest terms in which God had repeatedly stated the continuance and perpetuity of David's dynasty in Israel, this was abrogated by the announcement made by Hosea in chapter iii. 4 and 5 :

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice and without an image, and without an ephod and without teraphim : Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God and David their king : and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days."

Remember that this word was spoken some fifty years before the captivity of the house of Israel and some 180 before the words of God uttered by Jeremiah in the passages given above (xxxiii.). Jeremiah must have known Hosea's prophecy, and yet he spoke, as we have seen, of a never-failing ruler of David's line in Israel. There can be no real contradiction in these two prophecies.

There is great controversy as to who are meant in this verse in Hosea by "the children of Israel." Some say it means the house of Judah, while others maintain that it is the house of Israel.

If it really means the Jews, then the solution of the difficulty is easy, since it is quite true that since the days of Zedekiah they have had no king of the Elect Dynasty ruling over them, and the conditions in the verse fit them perfectly. Jeremiah, as already noted, told of the passing away of David's dynasty from the kingdom of Judah. Jewish commentators take the verse as referring to the Jews. But the actual words are "children of Israel," and Hosea was a prophet to Israel and not to Judah ; and since in other passages Judah is referred to as "the house of Judah" (i. 7), or as "the children of Judah" (i. 11), we should expect these words "children of Israel" to refer to them of the northern kingdom, who went to Assyria and thence into Europe and ultimately into the Appointed Place, where

they "returned" to the Lord their God in the latter days and to David their king. This latter in the double sense of David's greater Son, their Redeemer, by becoming a Christian nation, and secondly, under the sway of David's dynasty in the Appointed Place.

There must have been, ever since the days of Zedekiah, a seed of David ruling over a section at least of Israel. The Jews certainly had no such king at least to the time of Christ, and since that day they have had no such king. After their return from Babylon they were in subjection to foreign rulers: Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman in turn. To say that the Davidic Covenant found its fulfilment in our Saviour, when He came to suffer and die for our redemption, is not correct. He came not then as the reigning Messiah of Israel. He did not then take the sceptre and reign at all, much less "reign over the house of Jacob for ever." Nor was "the throne of His father David" given to Him at that time. It will be remembered that when on one occasion the populace would have made Him king by force, He absolutely refused to comply with their wishes.

Moreover the leaders of the nation absolutely rejected Him from being king over them: "We have no king but Cæsar!" was their loud affirmation. Our blessed Lord, while here among men was Himself, with His nation, under the bondage and rule of an alien empire, the Roman. This our Lord fully acknowledged in His reply to the question of paying tribute: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

To say that the Lord Jesus is now the spiritual King over Israel is gloriously true, but this does not meet the terms of this Covenant, which were literal, referring to literal kings of David's line in all generations. But even so, from the time of Zedekiah to that of Christ there was no Davidic king over the Jews such as this Covenant demanded. Hence the demands of the case are not met by such an explanation.

Did any of David's seed reign over the house of Israel that was deported into Assyria and that later passed into Europe? We know that it did not. Those in Assyria

certainly did abide many days without a king and without a prince, etc., as described in Hosea iii. 4. Over what section of Israel was the seed reigning after the days of Zedekiah?

This king died in Babylon. Before he was taken thither his sons were slain before his eyes, which were then put out (Jeremiah xxxix. 6, 7). What became of the seed of David? Zedekiah had two daughters, whose lives were spared.

These two princesses, most strange to relate, were not carried away captive to Babylon, but were left behind in Palestine; an event probably without parallel in the history of Eastern warfare. Equally strange is the fact that Jeremiah the prophet, with Baruch the scribe, was also permitted to remain in the land instead of being deported. Tremendous issues hung upon these two unique occurrences. For within the next three years or so, according to Irish traditions, there landed in Ulster a seer named Jeremy and his friend Baru with a royal princess from Egypt.

At this stage it may be asked, Are there any clues that may assist us in prosecuting the study of how this Covenant could have received fulfilment? The indications of the direction for the search of evidence are clearly two.

1st. It is obvious that, since all the male heirs of the Seed Royal of Zedekiah were slain by the Chaldeans, we must look for the carrying out of the Covenant to one of these daughters of Zedekiah, the royal princesses of Judah.

2nd. The Appointed Place of Israel should give us some idea as to where to look for its fulfilment. It will be remembered that the promise of this Place was one half of the dual promise that was made to David. The Promise of the Appointed Place and the Davidic Covenant were given at one and the same time, and on the same occasion, the one bears on the other, and they work out in unison.

We have seen that God promised to give *Israel* a place of their own in addition to the Land promised to their Fathers, where they might be restored to favour, and which was to be a sanctuary for their safety. He also at the same time covenanted that David should never lack a ruler over *Israel* in all generations. Is it not the *only* and perfectly legitimate conclusion that the dynasty of David must be found in this

Appointed Place ? With these Scripture clues we should be on the right lines for further research. In the chapter on the Appointed Place it was demonstrated from the Scriptures that that place of security was none other than the British Isles. We have, therefore, before us for investigation :

1. The Princess Royal of Judah, and
2. The British Isles.

The further prosecution of the story must deal with traditions and legends which, though very fascinating, are beyond the limits of this book, which is pre-eminently an investigation whether the Bible has any basis for the belief that the Anglo-Saxon race is none other than the nationally redeemed and restored House of Israel.



CHAPTER VIII

THE RENDING OF THE KINGDOM

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CHAPTER VIII

THE RENDING OF THE KINGDOM

BEFORE commencing a study of the rending of the kingdom, it is well to have a clear idea of what the kingdom implied. It was formed by the chosen seed of Abraham. It was on a quite different plane from any other kingdom or empire. It was above all others, for it was a divine institution.

It will be remembered that, after the Tribes came out of Egypt, in the days when Judah was His Sanctuary and Israel was His Dominion, God at Sinai declared that they should be unto Him "a Kingdom," a Kingdom of priests :

"Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar people unto Me above all people : for all the earth is Mine : And *ye shall be unto Me a Kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*" (Exod. xix. 5, 6).

Before there was any visible king reigning over this race, it was a Theocracy, with God as its King and Ruler. This fact is clearly brought out when the people demanded a king like the other surrounding nations. When Samuel in his distress laid the people's request before Jehovah, God's reply to him was (1 Sam. viii. 7) :

"Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee : for they have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.*"

God directly stated that He was their King and that He reigned over them. Israel had been, indeed was, is ever, the kingdom of God on earth : His literal and material kingdom. Our God has His Kingdom in the Spiritual realm and He has, as assuredly, His material, literal and political kingdom on earth.

When Samuel expostulated with the people for wanting a

visible king, he emphasized the same fact again in 1 Samuel xii. 12 :

"And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay ; but a king shall reign over us ; when *the Lord your God was your King.*"

The very fact that the Lord their God was their King, differentiated them from all earthly kingdoms. In Zephaniah iii. 15, God is spoken of in the same way :

"*The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee.*"

God Himself spoke of Israel as "My Kingdom" (1 Chron. xvii. 14) :

"But I will settle him (Solomon) in Mine house, and in *My Kingdom* for ever ; and his throne shall be established for evermore."

In 1 Chronicles xxix. 23 we are informed :

"Then Solomon sat on *the throne of the Lord.*"

David, speaking of it, said :

"Thine is the Kingdom" (1 Chron. xxix. 11).

And again (1 Chron. xxviii. 5) :

"*The throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel.*"

Jehovah had no other kingdom on earth but that over Israel. It is a truth to be firmly grasped that *Israel was the national kingdom of God*. It is over this very kingdom that the Son of God will one day reign as its visible King. This very throne has been given to Him (Luke i. 32, 33) :

"The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David."

Note that when Christ comes, He is not going to set up or form a *new* Kingdom, but He will assume what God had already set up, He will take what used to be David's throne and kingdom, for the words stand :

"And He (Christ) shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever."

Israel is to be the everlasting kingdom of Christ, for the irrevocable word reads :

"And of His Kingdom there shall be no end."

This, be it noted, is not an utterance concerning a spiritual kingdom.

THE NUMBER OF THE TRIBES

How many tribes were there ? How were they reckoned ?
Jacob had Twelve Sons.

By Leah, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

By Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin.

By Bilhah, Dan and Naphtali.

By Zilpah, Gad and Asher.

TABLE No. VII

THE TWELVE SONS OF ISRAEL											
Reuben	Simeon	Levi	Judah	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Joseph	Benjamin

Before his death Jacob took the two sons of Joseph and adopted them as his own sons, and gave them inheritance of sons instead of that of grandsons (Gen. xlviii. 5, 6, R.V.).

"And now thy two sons, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine ; Ephraim and Manasseh, even as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine. And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine ; they shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance."

Therefore in the above list the name of Joseph disappears and is replaced by the names of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. This makes the number of the tribes *thirteen*, and not twelve. The Bible, however, never speaks of thirteen tribes. How is this ? It is due to God's decree that the tribe of Levi, unlike the other tribes, was to have no inheritance in the land, and so it was never reckoned a territorial tribe. (See Num. ii. 33, xxvi. 62 ; Deut. x. 9, xviii. 2 ; Josh. xiii. 14 and 33, xiv. 3 and 4, xviii. 7). The people therefore consisted of Twelve Tribes and the Levites. The Levites had cities and ground allotted to them in the territories of all the other tribes. They were not liable for military service, but were set

apart wholly for the service of the tabernacle, and later of the temple, for the ministry of the law and the priesthood. In the above list then the names of Joseph and Levi must be left out and those of Ephraim and Manasseh inserted, and this makes the Twelve tribes of the race of Abraham as given and reckoned in the Bible.

TABLE No VIII

THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL											
L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Reuben	Simeon	Judah	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Ephraim	Manasseh	Benjamin

Levi (L) distributed : Joseph duplicated.

The Rending of the Kingdom, or the division of the Twelve Tribes of Israel into the Two Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, was one of the great events in the history of the world. It is a subject that has received very little attention. It is fraught with far-reaching influences, the effects of which are being evolved and developed in the great world-wide movements of the present day.

The investigation of that event brings out the supreme fact that it was the deliberate and purposeful Act of God. "It was a thing that was brought about of the Lord" (1 Kings xii. 15, R.V.). On the face of it, it appears a sad spectacle to see the Chosen Race thus rent into two parts. We should have expected to see this "elect people" continuing as a united people. The rending is usually regarded as a sad calamity, but the fact has to be clearly faced that it was the Act of God. It was no mere act of political wantonness on the part of the revolvers, indeed it is impossible to refuse sympathy with the people in their legitimate request to the new king to lighten the heavy and burdensome taxation that had sorely oppressed them during the latter

years of King Solomon. We can well understand their revolt upon receiving Rehoboam's mad reply. It was the young king's folly that precipitated this stupendous event. True, but behind it all was the over-ruling God, for we read in 1 Kings xii. 15 : "the cause was from the Lord." Not that God delights in the foolishness of man, but He does cause it to work out His purposes. The result was His will, His wish, His purpose. The event was decreed by Jehovah long before Rehoboam played his ignoble part in bringing it about, "for it was a thing brought about of the Lord, that He might establish His word."

Was it merely a necessary chastisement ? Was it only a punishment inflicted for the sins of Solomon ? That it was so in measure is obvious. Owing to the idolatries of his later days, we read (1 Kings xi. 9, 11) :

"The Lord was angry with Solomon. . . . Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee . . . I will surely rend the kingdom from thee and will give it to thy servant."

God's word also to Jeroboam by Ahijah the Shilonite emphasizes this (1 Kings xi. 31, 33) :

"Behold I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon. . . . Because they have forsaken Me and have worshipped . . ."

the various gods of the heathen round about them.

"And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever" (verse 39).

It is clear from these verses :

1. That it was God's doing entirely, "I will rend," "I will surely rend."
2. That the immediate cause was the sin of the king and of the people.
3. That it was in the nature of a chastisement of the seed of David.
4. That it was not to be perpetual.

Was this Rending of the Kingdom then only the affliction of the seed of David ? or was there beyond this a wise and beneficent purpose ?

God not only *decreed* and also *carried out* this separation, but He *maintained* it. He refused to have His purpose

frustrated and made of none effect. When Rehoboam marshalled the armies of Judah and Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand strong, to fight and subdue the revolted tribes, "to bring again *the kingdom* to Rehoboam," God intervened. He sent "Shemiah the man of God" to speak to Rehoboam, and definitely forbade the expedition, which doubtless would have been successful (1 Kings xii. 24) :

"Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel : return every man to his house ; for *this thing is from Me.*"

Here we have it reiterated that it was God's act, and note, God's determination to fully maintain His own work ; He will not have it undone. God must have had some cogent reason for thus dividing His people into two sections. The one nation became "*the two families which the Lord hath chosen*" (Jer. xxxiii. 24). Such was God's choice.

Several years later God once more spoke to Jeroboam through the same old prophet Ahijah, foretelling the death of his son, and these are the words (1 Kings xiv. 7, 8) :

"Go tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over My people Israel, and *rent the kingdom away from the house of David*, and gave it thee . . ."

One cannot regard it as a regrettable incident in the history of this "predestined" race. Nor was it an "*unfortunate schism*" as some affirm.

That this "rending" was God's own design and doing was fully recognized by the writer of the second Book of Kings, usually conceded to be Ezra, the leader of the returned captives from Babylon. He had no doubts on the point. Thus 2 Kings xvii. 20, 21 :

"And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until He had cast them out of His sight. *For He rent Israel from the house of David ;* and they made Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, king . . ."

If this "rending" were displeasing to the God of Israel, why did He make such gracious offers to the new king of Israel as He did ? (See 1 Kings xi. 37, 38) :

"And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if

thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee and wilt walk in My ways and do that is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as David My servant did ; that *I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David*, and will give Israel unto thee."

Such words are not spoken to one running counter to God's mighty purposes. What greater blessing could God offer to the new king than to build him a house as sure as that He had covenanted by oath to secure to David ? God surely had some far-reaching and beneficent plan of His own, though He did not choose to reveal it at that period. When we come to read the prophets we find on careful perusal that the future destiny of each of the two families which God hath chosen is kept separate and distinct, and that they differ widely.

We have noted that the division was not to be perpetual. Later scriptures, the prophets, assert that there was to be one day a reunion of the Two Houses. The questions naturally arise : How long was the separation to continue ? When was the reunion to take place ? Has it taken place already, or are these two families distinct and separate to-day ?

It is held by many that it has taken place already, that the reunion of the two nations or kingdoms into one nation and people was effected at the restoration after the Babylonian captivity. We are asked to believe that the rending wrought by God Himself was quietly and unostentatiously repaired and the breach healed in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Does it not seem strange that what was the signal interposition of God in making and maintaining the separation should have had so little result, if indeed they were thus reunited at that time ? What was attained by it all ? What purpose was accomplished by such a drastic act ? Wherein lies the beneficence of it ? Does it not seem unlikely that God's edict should be so simply revoked ?

As a matter of fact, we know that they were not so reunited. We have seen that Scripture is clear on this point, that the Apocrypha bears it out, and that the historian corroborates it.

The ultimate reunion is a glorious fact which has yet to come to pass. The detailed statements made by the prophets regarding it were not fulfilled at the time of the return of the Jews, clearly proving that it was not accomplished at that time. Failure to grasp this has led to the wholly mistaken idea that the Jews of to-day represent the Twelve Tribes of ISRAEL, whereas they are only that portion of them which was known as the House or Kingdom of Judah. The result is that all the prophecies, those which clearly relate to Israel, and also those that purely concern Judah, are massed together in hopeless confusion in the minds of Bible readers and are one and all applied to the Jews. Of course they do not fit, hence men are led to infidelity by concluding that the promises and prophecies in God's Word have failed and are not divine.

Before the rending took effect, the event had been fore-ordained of God. There are two declarations of His purpose to be considered, both to be found in 1 Kings xi. The first to Solomon and the second to Jeroboam by the mouth of Ahijah the prophet.

To take the first prediction to Solomon (1 Kings xi. 11-13) :

"Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon . . . I will surely rend *the kingdom* from thee and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake : but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away *all the kingdom*, but will give one tribe to thy son for David My servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

Here first God said He would rend the kingdom from Solomon, but qualified it by saying that He would not do it in Solomon's day but in his son's time. And further that He would not rend away *all* the kingdom but only a portion of it, and that his son should have a portion of it, even *one* tribe.

In the second prediction, that to Jeroboam, we have exactly the same points repeated. The prophet having torn the new garment in twelve pieces gave ten pieces to Jeroboam (1 Kings xi. 31-36) :

"And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces : For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold I will rend *the kingdom* out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee : but he shall have one tribe for My servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake the,

city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. . . . Howbeit I will not take *the whole kingdom* out of his hand : but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David My servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept My commandments and My statutes. But I will take *the kingdom* out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son will I give *one* tribe, that David, My servant, may have a light alway before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen Me to put My name there."

The Twelve Tribes were in the hand of Solomon, and God said He would rend "*the kingdom*" but not the whole of it out of his hand.

We need to know clearly what is meant by "*the kingdom.*" What tribes exactly constitute it ? Do the Twelve, or only Eleven, or only Ten Tribes complete "*the kingdom*" ?

It is considered by some, and so stated in books, that the Ten Tribes alone constituted it. They base their assertion on the words, "But I will take *the kingdom* out of his son's hand and will give it unto thee, *even ten tribes.*" This they contend means that the Ten Tribes only make "*the kingdom.*" There are several such references to the Ten Tribes as "*the kingdom,*" thus (1 Kings xii. 26) :

"And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall *the kingdom* return to the house of David."

Again, the words spoken to Jeroboam in later years (1 Kings xiv. 7-8) :

"I . . . rent *the kingdom* away from the house of David, and gave it thee."

These verses seem to point to this conclusion. But this contention is wrong in the light of our context, for God explicitly told Solomon that He would "not rend *all the kingdom*" from his son's hand. Therefore the Ten Tribes do not constitute all "*the kingdom.*" And to Jeroboam the prophet said, "I will not take *the whole kingdom* out of his hand." It is clear, therefore, that "*the kingdom*" is more than the Ten Tribes.

From God's two utterances it would appear that He intended to remove the whole of it from Solomon, and then qualified His intention, for reasons stated, by giving him One Tribe of the kingdom. If this be the correct view, "*the kingdom*" must have consisted of Eleven Tribes, namely the

Ten and the One. Judah was not reckoned in "the kingdom." When God spoke of rending the kingdom from Solomon He never intended to take Judah away from him. The tribe of Judah seems to have belonged to the seed of David in a special way. If this be so the Twelve Tribes consisted of "the kingdom" and Judah.

The perpetual rivalry between Judah and the house of Joseph in the preceding history must have struck all intelligent readers. What was the cause of it? The origin of it all is to be found in Genesis xlix. The great Abrahamic Covenant Promises, which had been conferred on Isaac and Jacob, were not bestowed equally on the twelve sons of Jacob. Two of these sons, Judah and Joseph, received paramount blessings, while the other ten received nothing in comparison with them. They received special minor blessings, but the great Messianic and Regal (or Sceptre) blessings did not go to them, nor did the great Birthright blessing fall on them. The Birthright blessings were bestowed only on Joseph, while the Messianic and Sceptre blessings were given only to Judah. Judah was to be the regal tribe, of it were ISRAEL'S kings to come and continue without break until Christ Jesus should take over the sceptre (Gen. xlix. 10) :

"The sceptre *shall not depart* from Judah . . . until Shiloh come."

These two sons of Jacob received the pre-eminent blessings of the Covenant : they received the dual priority over their brethren. They were the two leading tribes in ISRAEL. They were always rivals, and throughout their history were constantly envying and vexing one another. (A great day is to come when this is to cease, see Isa. xi. 13.)

All the other tribes invariably ranged themselves on the side of Ephraim (which was the leading tribe of the house of Joseph).

PREMONITORY SIGNS OF CLEAVAGE.

Long before the great disruption took place there was a distinct cleavage between Judah and the other Eleven Tribes. There were abundant premonitory signs and symptoms of division. They are clearly seen in the preceding history.

The terms "Israel and Judah" or "All Israel and Judah" are of frequent occurrence, and they always mean the Eleven Tribes and Judah. We notice it in the reign of King Saul. On Saul's death it was emphasized for a period of seven years, during which the tribes were thus divided, Ishbosheth reigning over Israel, that is the Eleven Tribes, and David over the tribe of Judah alone. Ishbosheth ruled over the whole of "the kingdom." At the end of this period of seven years, Abner having quarrelled with Ishbosheth, declared his intention "to translate *the kingdom* from the house of Saul and to set up the throne of David over *Israel* and over *Judah*" (2 Sam. iii. 10). The Eleven Tribes are here again spoken of as *the kingdom*, and a marked distinction is made between Israel and Judah. The final result of Abner's work was that (2 Sam. v. 5) :

"He (David) reigned thirty and three years over *all* Israel and Judah."

It is important to notice the terms "all Israel and Judah." So many people think that the term "all Israel" must include the tribe of Judah. Here it is used only for the Eleven Tribes. It is noteworthy how often this term is used in the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles in contradistinction to Judah. In these books the term seldom includes the tribe of Judah.

Whenever there was any numbering of the people for military or census purposes, this was always the grouping of the tribes, and there was never any other. Thus when Saul went to fight Nahash we read in 1 Samuel xi. 8 :

"And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of *Israel* were three hundred thousand, and the men of *Judah* thirty thousand."

And again in 1 Samuel xv. 4 :

"And Saul gathered the people together and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of *Judah*."

In both instances the tribes are divided into Judah on the one hand and Israel on the other. For some reason or other Judah was always separate from the other Eleven, and this too at a time when they were one nation under one king.

When David sent Joab to number the people this same distinction and grouping was maintained. We have two accounts of this episode (2 Sam. xxiv. 1; and 1 Chron. xxi. 5). In Samuel the king's command was, "Go number *Israel* and *Judah*." Here again we have a united people under one king spoken of in two groups. It is too persistent to be ignored. In the Chronicles account the King's order is given as, "Go number *Israel* from Beersheba even to Dan." Notice the use of the term "*Israel*" in the two passages. In the second "*Israel*" is used in its widest sense, embracing the Twelve Tribes (evident from the words "from Beersheba even to Dan"). In the first "*Israel*" is used in its more usual and restricted sense, being applied to the Eleven Tribes only.

Joab, it will be remembered did not fully execute his instructions, for the king's word was abominable to Joab. As a matter of fact he only numbered Judah and the Ten Tribes. In his wrathful displeasure he disobeyed his orders and refrained from numbering the Benjamites and Levites. The Levites not being counted a tribe in Israel (p. 165) were naturally omitted, but he had no excuse for ignoring Benjamin. Joab's answer to the order "Go number *Israel*" is given in the terms of "*All Israel and Judah*." It was seen above that "*Israel*" stood here for the Twelve Tribes, and by "*All Israel*" Joab intended David to understand the Eleven Tribes. To put the terms here used in the form of an equation :

"ISRAEL" = "All Israel" and "Judah."

1 Chron. xxi. 5 : "And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And *all they of Israel* were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword : and *Judah* was four hundred three score and ten thousand men that drew sword. But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them ; for the king's word was abominable to Joab."

In the great rebellion of Absalom exactly the same division took place. The Eleven Tribes made Absalom their king, while the tribe of Judah alone was loyal to David (2 Sam. xv. 6) :

"And on this manner did Absalom to *all Israel* that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of *Israel*."

It was "All Israel" versus Judah, the Eleven against the one (see also verse 13).

And it may be recalled that the cursing Shimei used these words to the fugitive king (2 Sam. xvi. 8) :

"The Lord hath delivered *the kingdom* into the hand of Absalom thy son."

The whole of "the Kingdom" was with Absalom, only the men of Judah sided with David.

After the defeat of Absalom a very serious quarrel arose over the king's return (2 Sam. xix. 40, etc.) :

"All the people of *Judah* conducted the king and also half the people of *Israel*. And behold all the men of *Israel* came to the king and said unto the king, Why have our brethren, the men of *Judah*, stolen thee away, and have brought the king and his household, and all David's men with him over Jordan? . . ."

There were fierce words between these rival parties, and we note in verse 43 :

"The men of *Israel* answered the men of *Judah*, and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye."

This verse is quoted to draw attention to the fact that the men of Israel claimed only "*ten parts*" in David. Does this militate against the contention that "the kingdom" consisted of Eleven Tribes?

No sooner was Absalom's rebellion crushed than yet another formidable revolt broke out under Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite, and in a moment the realm was again divided and plunged into deadly feud. The division was again the usual one, Judah on the one side and the Eleven Tribes on the other, or "Judah" versus "the kingdom," for we read (2 Sam. xx. 2) :

"So every man of *Israel* went up from after David and followed Sheba the son of Bichri, but the men of *Judah* clave unto their king."

The evidence for the Eleven Tribes being "the kingdom" seems strong, if not absolute. It appears to preclude all the Twelve Tribes as constituting it. Why did God speak of giving Rehoboam *one tribe*, when as a matter of fact he

reigned over two, viz. Judah and Benjamin? Had "the kingdom" consisted of the Twelve God would have spoken of giving him two tribes. If this interpretation is right it solves completely what has always been a puzzle, and the difficulty vanishes. The *one* tribe given back was a part of "the kingdom," and was the tribe of Benjamin, which in reality belonged to "all Israel." It is very clear that Judah, for some reason or other, was not included in "the kingdom."

There is a verse in Psalm cxiv. which was written in the days when the distinction between Israel and Judah was being acutely emphasized, but before they were sundered into the two nations, which says (verses 1 and 2) :

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; *Judah* was His sanctuary, and *Israel* His dominion."

Does this bear at all on the question in hand? Does it not indicate that even in such early days as the exodus, there was this distinction or grouping. Judah was not a part of the "dominion," but the other tribes did compose the "dominion" or "the kingdom" of our study.

TABLE No IX

THE SANCTUARY AND THE DOMINION											
L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Judah	Reuben	Simeon	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Ephraim	Manasseh	Benjamin
One Tribe.	Eleven Tribes.					The Kingdom.					
The Sanctuary.						The Dominion.					

Thus far we have considered the rending of the kingdom as being the act of God, and have examined the predictions concerning it, and have tried to solve what was exactly meant by the expression "the kingdom." It now only remains to study the event itself, which is narrated in 1 Kings xii. and 2 Chronicles x.

Isaiah speaks of this time as "the day that Ephraim departed from Judah" (vii. 17), the term Ephraim being used to denote Israel, the Ten Tribes. This appellation is frequently so used in the Scriptures for the Ten Tribes. The story is well known to all. Upon receiving Rehoboam's rough answer, the banner of revolt was unfurled once more. But now it was to be a more permanent and far-reaching event, extending through long centuries.

"So when *All Israel* saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, *O Israel*: now see to thine house, David. So *Israel* departed to their tents . . . (verse 19). So *Israel* rebelled against the house of David unto this day. And it came to pass when *all Israel* heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over *All Israel*: there was none that followed the house of David, but *the tribe of Judah only*" (1 Kings xii. 16-20).

It is clear that at this moment "All Israel," i.e. the Eleven Tribes, made Jeroboam king over them. Even Benjamin refused the sovereignty of Rehoboam! It was indeed a case of "See to thine own house (i.e. Judah), David!" "for there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of *Judah only*." This is a fact that is usually unnoticed. Thus in the first days of the rebellion at least, the whole of "the kingdom" revolted from Rehoboam. For the moment it looked as if the divine thought to rend the kingdom in its entirety was an accomplished fact. It looked as if Jehovah's qualifying word, "howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand," was in jeopardy of not being realized. But was His word to fail? That it did not we know full well. It is clear that something must have happened, what it was we are not told, whereby the tribe of Benjamin, in the course of a few days or more, was led to return to the allegiance of Rehoboam. And thus the word of God was established, and came to pass even as decreed, for the king had one tribe of "the kingdom," Benjamin, restored to him. He and the seed of David reigned over Judah and Benjamin till the time of Zedekiah. Let it be emphasized that they reigned over the tribe of Judah and also of this portion of "the kingdom"

as represented by Benjamin ; also that this portion of "the kingdom" remained with Judah until the days of Christ and until at least A.D. 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus.

The kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam was composed wholly of "the kingdom," but it did not embrace the whole of "the kingdom" since the tribe of Benjamin was lacking from it.

TABLE No. X

THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH										
Levites										
Judah	Benjamin	Reuben	Simeon	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Ephraim
Two Tribes with Levites.		Ten Tribes. No Levites.								
		Manasseh								

Why was the tribe of Benjamin thus severed from the rest of "the kingdom"? Note that it does not say that the Twelve Tribes were rent into two parts, but that "the kingdom" itself was rent: that is, the Eleven Tribes, the "all Israel," "the dominion" was rent and sundered: Ten tribes of it forming the northern kingdom, and one tribe of it rent away and given to the seed of David. Why was One tribe thus given? The answer supplied in Scripture is a twofold one; first, for David's sake, and second, for Jerusalem's sake.

Why for David's sake? "Because he kept My commandments and My statutes," and also "that David, My servant, may have a light alway before Me in Jerusalem." Had not God sworn by oath unto David that his Kingdom over *Israel* should be ruled in perpetuity by his seed? Now if Rehoboam and the succeeding kings of David's dynasty had reigned over the tribe of Judah alone, God's word to David would not have been fulfilled. David would not have had a man sitting on the throne of David ruling over "the kingdom."

Hence it was for David's sake, to keep His promise with him, that God gave Benjamin, a part of "the kingdom," to the seed of David. Thus the reigning monarch did at the same time rule over "the kingdom" of Israel (represented by Benjamin) as well as over Judah, the tribe of the Sanctuary. The seed of David did in fact reign over Israel as well as over Judah until the death of Zedekiah.

When king Abijah spoke of his kingdom (the southern) as "*the kingdom* of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David" (2 Chron. xiii. 8), he spoke a true word.

When our Lord came to this earth, the Jews consisted of these same two tribes, Judah and Benjamin (together with Levites). What did He mean when, speaking to the leaders of the people, He said that "the kingdom of God" should be taken from them and given to "a nation" bringing forth the fruits thereof? There is doubtless more than one interpretation of these words. May not one be that "the kingdom" as represented by Benjamin should be now taken away from them and be given, not to the Church, not to all and sundry nations and peoples; but to *a nation*? Call it a secondary meaning of the words if you will. We can understand a similar meaning of our Lord's words on another occasion, when He said, "The Kingdom of God is among you." It was quite true in this sense. Moreover, the only nation in the Scriptures foreordained of God to bring forth the fruits of righteousness was His restored and redeemed Israel. Benjamin, which had been rent in Rehoboam's time from the rest of "the kingdom" (God's only earthly kingdom), was to be restored to it once more.

The second reason given for the loan of Benjamin to the seed of David was, "For Jerusalem's sake." Judah was the tribe of the Sanctuary. The temple of God was in Jerusalem. But Jerusalem was not one of the cities of Judah. It was situated in the land of Benjamin. Hence on account of Jerusalem this tribe was given to the seed of David, and thus Judah continued to be in this sense "His sanctuary." The tribe was given to Judah "that David, My servant, may alway have a light before Me in Jerusalem." And so it

was till the time of the Messiah and the final destruction of the city. Benjamin was the light-bearing tribe. It was doubtless this tribe that bore the light of the Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth. Dean Farrar states that of the twelve Apostles only one was of the tribe of Judah, namely Judas Iscariot, and that the eleven were Benjamites. St. Paul, who many hold was the Christ-appointed Apostle to fill the place of Judas, was certainly a Benjamite.

To summarize :

1. The Kingdom of God on earth is Israel, the elect seed of Abraham.
2. It consisted of the Dominion and the Sanctuary. All Israel and Judah.
3. "The Kingdom" strictly speaking was only Eleven Tribes.
4. The Rending of the Kingdom was the rending of the Eleven Tribes, the separation of Benjamin from the other Ten.
5. After the Rending.
 - (a) The Northern Kingdom of the Ten Tribes consisted wholly of "the Kingdom" but not of the whole Kingdom.
 - (b) The Southern Kingdom consisted of Judah (with the Levites) and of "the Kingdom" as represented by Benjamin.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF ISRAEL'S SEED

TABLE No. XI

THE TWELVE SONS OF ISRAEL

Reuben	Simeon	Levi	Judah	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Joseph	Benjamin
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THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Reuben	Simeon	Judah	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Ephraim	Manasseh	Benjamin

Levi (L) distributed and Joseph duplicated.

THE SANCTUARY AND THE DOMINION

L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Judah	Reuben	Simeon	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Ephraim	Manasseh	Benjamin

One Tribe
Sanctuary.

Eleven Tribes ; The Kingdom,
The Dominion.

THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

Levites
Judah
Benjamin

Reuben	Simeon	Issachar	Zebulun	Dan	Naphtali	Gad	Asher	Ephraim	Manasseh
--------	--------	----------	---------	-----	----------	-----	-------	---------	----------

Two Tribes
(with Levites).

Ten Tribes
(with no Levites).

CHAPTER IX
THE CAPTIVITIES OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

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THE CAPTIVITIES OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

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THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

Three distinct stages.

TERMINATION OF ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENT.

Terminal Era.

TERMINATION OF JUDAH'S PUNISHMENT.

Terminal Era.

ISRAEL RESTORED UNDER THE NEW COVENANT.

JUDAH RESTORED UNDER THE MOSAIC COVENANT.

In unbelief.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAPTIVITIES OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

THE captivities of the two houses of Israel and Judah took place at very different periods of time, far separated the one from the other, and by different empires. In Jeremiah l. 17, these are graphically stated and contrasted.

"Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, hath broken his bones."

Here the captivities of ISRAEL, the Twelve Tribes, are described, that of each of the two houses separately. Note the difference, Israel "devoured" and Judah damaged. Israel eaten up and lost, disappears. Judah, on the other hand, is broken up but is not lost sight of nationally.

The captivity of neither took place at one definite date, but was effected in several distinct movements, with intervals of years between. It is therefore impossible to give one single year as the date of the captivity. It was effected in several stages, and it becomes necessary to speak of the periods of the several deportations as the Captivity Era.

THE CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL

Before considering the invasions and deportations of Israel, prophecies made concerning the captivity should be noted.

Hosea's Prophecy

Hosea foretells of Israel's downfall in two distinct stages.

The first, the cessation of the kingdom:

"And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel, for yet a little while and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel" (Hos. i. 4).

Here is prophesied the end of the kingdom.

The second, which was given later :

"And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-Ruhamah ; for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel but *I will utterly take them away*" (Hos. i. 6).

Here is foretold the complete removal of the nation from Palestine. These two events were not to happen at the same time. No dates as to when they were to take place are given.

Isaiah's Prophecy

Isaiah's prophecy was :

"Within three score and five years shall *Ephraim be broken that it be not a people*" (Isa. vii. 8).

The time of this utterance was when Pekah, king of Israel, in alliance with Rezin, king of Syria, was about to invade Judah in the reign of Ahaz, about 741 B.C. It says nothing about the end of the kingdom, but the end of the nation in Palestine. It obviously coincides with Hosea's Lo-Ruhamah prophecy, the complete removal of the people from their land. This sixty-five years would terminate about 676 B.C., a crucial date in the history of Israel.

The first invasion happened in the reign of Pekah, the last king but one of Israel : the second took place in the reign of the next and last monarch, Hoshea : the third was effected when there was no kingdom in the land.

The work was carried out under different kings of Assyria. The first was by Pul and Tiglath-Pileser : the second by Shalmaneser (and Sargon) : the third by Esar-Haddon. In all three instances the captives were carried away into Assyria.

A period of twenty years intervened between the first and second ; while forty-five separated the second and third.

The approximate dates were—741, 721 and 676 B.C.

The Captivity Era, then, extended from 741 to 676 B.C.—a period of sixty-five years. It is important to bear this in mind, for in trying to determine the date of the termination of the Seven Times punishment that Israel was to undergo, it is obvious that it will not end abruptly at a single particular

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date, but will be a corresponding "Terminal Era" lasting at least some sixty-five years.

The following Table No. XII gives these particulars in concise form.

TABLE No. XII
THE CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL

Date B.C.	King of Israel	King of Assyria	Intervals	Before Fall of Jerusalem in 587
741	Pekah	Tiglath-Pileser	} 20 yrs.	153 years
721	Hoshea	Shalmaneser		133 years
676	(none)	Esar-Haddon	} 45 yrs.	88 years

THE FIRST INVASION

There are two accounts of this movement.

2 Kings xv. 29 : "In the days of Pekah, king of Israel, came Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria."

A second description of this is found in 1 Chronicles v. 26.

"And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and he carried them away even the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh and brought them unto Hala and Habor, and Hara and to the river Gozan, unto this day."

The two and a half tribes to whom Moses had given possessions to the east of Jordan together with portions of the other tribes were the first to feel the brunt of the invasion and to be taken captive.

The Bible narrative does not mention how many captives were deported by Tiglath-Pileser ; it simply states that they were taken to Assyria : but in the Assyrian inscriptions of this king he states :

"All of its people, together with their goods, I carried off to Assyria." (See *The Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylon*, p. 292.)

This was the first deportation of Israel, and all the population of the conquered territory seems to have been removed to Hala, Habor, Hara and to the river of Gozan, as stated in the second account.

There is an interesting reference to this event in Isaiah ix. 1, 2, with a prophecy connected with this locality.

(R.V.): "But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. *In the former time* He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but *in the latter time* He made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

Referring to this event in "the former time" (that is the times before the first Advent of the Christ) the prophet foretells that this region, where the Assyrian blow first fell, should "in the latter time" (the same as "the latter days," that is the time after the coming of the Christ) be the very place where the "great light" should shine. And so indeed it came to pass, for this was the identical region that the Son of God, when He walked amongst men, mostly frequented and where He taught and did most of His mighty works (see Matthew iv. 13-16).

THE SECOND INVASION

There are two distinct accounts of this.

The break-up of the kingdom is thus narrated in 2 Kings xvii. 3-6:

"Against him came up Shalmaneser, king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea, for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

"Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Hala and Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. . ."

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A second account of this great events is thus recorded in 2 Kings xviii. 9 :

"And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea, son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it, even in the sixth year of Hezekiah that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel Samaria was taken. And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Hala and in Habor by the river of Gozan and in the cities of the Medes."

This was the end of the kingdom in Palestine. The words uttered by Hosea some fifty years before were fulfilled (Hos. i. 4) :

"I . . . will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel ;"

"As for Samaria her king is cut off as the foam upon the water" (Hos. x. 7). (See verse 15.)

In the last year of the siege Shalmaneser died ; so he never finished the siege or the invasion. His chief captain, Sargon, thereupon ascended the Assyrian throne. Sargon continued the siege, and finally captured Samaria in 721 B.C. This ended the *kingdom* of Israel in Palestine. The whole land was annexed by Assyria, and became part of the empire with an Assyrian governor set over it. Though the kingdom ceased, the Israelites continued to live on in their own land for another forty-nine years in bondage to Assyria.

After the fall of Samaria Sargon removed all the inhabitants of the city into Assyria, to Hala, Habor and the river of Gozan. The Assyrian monuments of Sargon state :

"In the beginning of my reign the city of Samaria I besieged, I captured . . . 27,280 of its inhabitants I carried away."

The importance of this invasion lies, not in the number of the captives deported, for that was a negligible figure, but in the fact that it "caused to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."

Another Assyrian inscription tells of the various people whom Sargon placed in the midst of Samaria. These were quite different from the peoples mentioned in 2 Kings xvii. 24, showing that it was some other king of Assyria who did that. The Bible does not name this king. Forty-five years

had yet to pass before Isaiah's "three score and five years' prophecy could be fulfilled.

THE THIRD INVASION

There is no direct account of this deportation, but it is clearly indicated. The year 676 B.C. witnessed the invasion of Palestine by Esar-Haddon. The brief account is given in 2 Chronicles xxxiii. 11 :

"Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon."

This un-named king was Esar-Haddon : he invaded the land of Judah and conquered Manasseh, its king. He did not annex the territory or take away any captives ; and later Manasseh restored to his throne and the kingdom of Judah continued till the time of Nebuchadnezzar. The date 676 B.C. was the crucial one for Israel according to Isaiah's prophecy that Ephraim should be "*broken that it be not a people.*"

Esar-Haddon was obviously the un-named Assyrian king who removed the Israelites who were living in their own land up to that time, and brought in the aliens and settled them in the cities of Samaria instead of Israel.

"And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof" (2 Kings xvii. 24).

This implies the removal of Israel to make room for this wholesale importation of Gentiles. These aliens were quite a different set of people from those put into the city of Samaria by Sargon after the fall of that city.

That it was indeed Esar-Haddon who effected this exchange of the population is confirmed by the statement made many years later by the inhabitants of the land of Samaria. These Samaritans came to Ezra, who had returned to Judea from Babylon with a remnant of the Jews from the captivity of Judah, with the request that they should be allowed to help the Jews in the rebuilding of the temple.

These people did not claim to be Israel, but, on the

contrary, confessed that they were of the people whom Esar-Haddon had brought in from foreign lands and had settled in the land of Israel.

There is no direct account in the Bible of this clearing-up process, but it seems clearly indicated.

"Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to Zerubbabel and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you ; for we seek your God, as ye do, and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-Haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither" (Ezra iv. 2).

Ezra and the Jews very rightly rejected the request of these Gentiles to assist in rebuilding the Temple of the God of ISRAEL.

Thus in the time appointed, 676 B.C., was fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of the "Three score and five years" that Ephraim should be "*broken that it be not a People*," and Hosea's prophecy that God would "utterly take them away." This was some ninety years before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C.

Jeremiah, several years later in a message from God to the people of Judah, said :

"I have cast out *all* your brethren, even *the whole seed of Ephraim*" (Jer. vii. 15).

Writing during the captivity in Babylon Ezra wrote of the complete removal of Israel thus in 2 Kings xvii :

"... the Lord removed them out of His sight" (verse 18).

"... until He had cast them out of His sight" (verse 20).

"Until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight" (verse 23).

and to leave no doubt as to the meaning adds :

"... there was none left but the tribe of Judah only" (verse 18).

There can be no doubt that Israel was completely removed from Palestine.

Israel was then taken to Assyria, some hundreds of miles away from Babylon, and there, as far as the Bible goes, their history ends. The Apocrypha, however, carries it one great stage farther. Esdras tells us that Israel passed out of Assyria into Europe. This is a very notable fact and of first importance. It took place about 650 B.C.

2 Esdras xiii. 40-46 : "These are the Ten Tribes which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of king Hoshea, whom Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, led away captive, and carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land. But they took counsel among themselves, that they would leave the heathen and go forth into a farther country, where never mankind dwelt, that they might keep their law, which they had never kept in their own land. And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. For the Most High then showed signs for them, and held still the flood till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half ; and the same region is called Ar-Sareth. Then dwelt they there until the latter time."

In connection with this statement of Esdras, it is interesting to learn that the historian Herodotus describes the migration of the Scythian people from Asia into Europe. The singular facts concerning this movement are that the Scythians migrated.

1. At the very period that Israel moved ;
2. From the self same region ;
3. Along exactly the same route ;
4. To the identical destination.

And it has been suggested that the Scythians of Herodotus were no other than the Lost Tribes of Israel.

It is well to realize the fact that the main body of the Israelites made their great trek into the land of Ar-Sareth (in South Russia, the Ukraine of to-day) at a time when the Kingdom of Judah was still in existence, and several years before the destruction of Jerusalem !

While no more is told in the Bible of Israel's *history* there is very much *prophesied* about their future restoration to God's favour and blessing, every word of which must come to pass. "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass ; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

Is it necessary to add that the captives of the northern kingdom were never known or called by the name Israel in the land or among the surrounding people of their captivity ? By the Assyrians they were known as Beth-Omri and written on the Assyrian monuments as Beth Khumri. They were

the Kimmeri, or Gimmeri, who have been identified as one with the Sacae. In Europe they are to be traced under the name Cimbri or Kimbri. It is only in Scripture that they were known as and called Israel ; to search for them under that name outside Bible history is a barren undertaking.

Before passing on, we might pause to consider an interesting event in the history of Judah that occurred some ten years or so after the fall of Samaria. It will be remembered that Sennacherib the king of Assyria invaded Judah in the days of Hezekiah, when he purposed to treat Judah as his fathers had treated Israel. God however had a very different plan, and miraculously delivered Jerusalem out of his hand. Nevertheless the Assyrians "came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them" (Isa. xxxvi. 1). On an Assyrian monument is an inscription which says that Sennacherib captured forty-six strong cities and carried away into Assyria 200,150 captives ! These were Jews ; and the date was at least 120 years before the Babylonian Captivity of Judah. This inscription mentions the place Saparda which is in the region to which the Israelites of the northern kingdom had been taken. The prophet Obadiah in verse 20 refers to "the captivity of Jerusalem which is in Shepharad."

It is well to bear in mind that there were with the captives of Israel in Assyria a very considerable section of Judah and Benjamin with Levites, altogether apart and distinct from the Jews of the Babylonish captivity of more than a century later.

After the exodus of the main portion of Israel out of Asia into the continent of Europe, which was to be the scene of their future wanderings until they reached the Place Appointed by God for them (2 Sam. vii. 10), troubles began to assail the Kingdom of Judah.

THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

Like the Kingdom of Israel, Judah was removed in three stages. The blows on Judah fell with ever increasing severity, and the third was the crushing of the kingdom and the

destruction of the temple and of the city. There was however, no complete evacuation of the land, a remnant of the poor and destitute were left behind.

2 Kings xxv. 12 : "But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen."

Some of the peasantry were left behind.

No foreign or alien colonists were placed in the emptied cities or land, as was the case with Israel ; and within seventy years some of the Jews were repatriated and returned from Babylon.

The three stages of Judah's captivity took place at relatively short intervals. They occurred in 606-04, 599 and 587 B.C. In the reigns respectively of the kings Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. The deportations in each case were made by one king only, namely Nebuchadnezzar. The intervals between the three stages were seven and twelve years only, making the Captivity Era of Judah but nineteen years, far shorter than that of Israel.

The story of the captivity of Judah is generally better known than that of Israel. The following Table No. XIII gives the particulars of it.

TABLE No. XIII

THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

Date B.C.	King of Judah	King of Babylon	Interval
606-04	Jehoiachim	Nebuchadnezzar	} 7 years
599	Jehoiachin	"	
587	Zedekiah	"	} 12 years

In each case it is the story of rebellion against the suzerain power of Babylon and its retribution.

The First Stage

The account is found in 2 Kings xxiv. 1 and 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 6, 7. The rebellious king Jehoiachim is bound in fetters and carried captive to Babylon, and the house of the Lord is despoiled. Daniel is amongst the captives taken.

The Second Stage

2 Kings xxiv. 11-16 and 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 10. Jehoiachin rebelled, Jerusalem is taken and the king together with the princes, the mighty men and craftsmen are carried away to Babylon, and the temple is still further robbed.

The Third Stage

2 Kings xxv. 1-11 and 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 17-20. Zedekiah breaks his oath with Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem is besieged and captured. The walls of the city are broken down, the palaces razed and the Temple is burnt and utterly destroyed. Zedekiah's sons are slain before his face and his eyes are put out. His daughters, the two princesses are left in the desolated land, whilst the blind king and the remainder of the nobility of the land are carried to Babylon.

The captives were a great host, but, as already said, the poor and destitute were left in the country. There was much bloodshed amongst these, and a large number moved into Egypt contrary to the word of God, and carried thither Jeremiah and the royal princesses.

The captivity of the Jews lasted seventy years in Babylon. In 518 B.C. they were partially restored to their land under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah, about a hundred and fifty years after the main deportation of Israel from Palestine, and more than a hundred years after the exodus to Europe.

Only the three invasions and deportations of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar have here been mentioned. It should however be recalled that some one hundred years before these, in B.C. 711, Judea had been invaded in the reign

of King Hezekiah by Sennacherib. Though he did not succeed in destroying the kingdom of Judah (as his father Sargon had destroyed the kingdom of Israel in B.C. 721), yet he captured forty-six fenced cities of Judah, and carried away over two hundred thousand Jews captive to Assyria. This is not found in our Bible, but is recorded in the Assyrian inscriptions.

These captive Jews were taken to Assyria, and placed in the regions of Hala, Habor and the river of Gozan, the very districts where the captives of Israel had been previously taken.

This removal of Jews to Assyria amply accounts for the fact that in the reign of Ahasuerus (see the Book of Esther), Jews were to be found throughout his empire. It also negatives the idea that the captives of Israel were therefore also called Jews. The Israelites were never called Jews by the Medo Persians ; they called them the Beth Sak. The Assyrians never called the Israelites Jews ; they knew them as the Beth Khumri.

There is a point that is very much overlooked concerning the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. It is the fact that during the seventy years' captivity this people lost their language. Hebrew became a dead language and thenceforth remained merely the language of their sacred writings and not the vernacular of daily life. When they returned to Palestine they spoke Syro-Chaldee, and did not understand the reading of the Law in the Hebrew tongue. In order to make them know the reading, interpreters had to render it into Chaldee (Neh. viii. 7-8). And it became necessary to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into the Chaldean language for general use in their religious services. In so short a period did the Jews lose their language. "Language is not a test of Race at all but only of Social Contact." And yet there are people to-day who expect that the Israelites of the northern kingdom, when found, will be talking their old language after the lapse of over twenty centuries.

The following Table shows the relationship between the great world Empires and the Captivities of Israel and

Judah ; the exit of Israel into Europe, and the return of the Jews to Palestine.

TABLE No. XIV
CAPTIVITIES OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

World Empire	Emperor	Date B.C.	Kings of Israel and Judah	The Captives of Israel and Judah
Assyrian (-606)	Tiglath-Pileser Shalman- eser Esar- Haddon	741	Pekah	Captivity of Israel (cap- tivity era 65 years)
		721 676	Hoshea (none)	
		650		Israel passes into Europe
Babylonian (606-538)	Nebuchad- nezzar " "	606- 04	Jehoia- chim	Captivity of Judah (cap- tivity era 19 years)
		599	Jehoiachin	
		587	Zedekiah	
Medo-Persian (538-331)	Cyrus	518	(none)	Return of the Jews

↓
133 yrs.
↑
70 yrs.
↓

The most striking feature of these captivities is the crucial fact that the main body of Israel passed out of the continent of Asia and entered into Europe. This great event is displaced in most minds by the strange idea, for which there is no basis, that Israel returned with the Jews to Palestine in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. As Bishop Newton in his *Dissertation on Prophecies*, writes: "The difficulty of finding out the habitations of the Ten Tribes has induced others to maintain that they returned to their own country with the other two tribes after the Babylonian Captivity."

Let it be stated that, if the prophecies speak true, the one

place on earth where the Ten Tribes will not be found is the place in which they were lost.

THE TERMINATION OF ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY

That the captivity of the House of Israel was to terminate is an assured fact in Scripture : that the nation was to be restored to God's high favour was ever the bright vision of many of the prophets. They with one voice proclaimed a glorious future for this nation after severe punishment. When are the days of chastisement to end ? When may we expect the rise of this people ?

Hosea, who was pre-eminently a prophet to the Ten-Tribed Kingdom, speaks enigmatically of this time. Thus in vi. 2 :

"After two days He will revive us : and in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight."

The great restoration is here foretold. Israel was dead and buried in oblivion to the world, but it was to revive and live again by the power of God. The resurrection of the nation was to be on the third day. What is this "third day" ? When is the time ? The "days" are of course figurative, and represent long periods of time. If we interpret them in the light of the words, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. iii. 8), they mean that after two thousand years they were to revive, and in the third thousand years their punishment would cease and Israel should rise to the fullness of national life and vigour. The main deportation of Israel took place, as seen above, in 676 B.C. : reckoning from that date the second day should end and the third day commence about A.D. 1279. Sometime, therefore, after that date we should expect to see the nation rise again. This is somewhat indefinite, but there are other data by which it is possible to fix more approximately the period of restoration.

The punishment foretold by Moses (Lev. xxvi. 18, 21, 24, 28) was to be "Seven Times." This is accepted as a period of 2,520 years, and it may be reckoned either in *lunar* years, or in prophetic years or in *solar* years. (A lunar year is 354

days, a prophetic year is 360 days, and a solar year 365 days.) The Captivity Era of Israel we saw above was 65 years, extending between 741 to 676 B.C. What will be the Terminal Era of their punishment? The following Table gives the terminations of the three stages of the captivity in lunar, paophetic, and solar years.

TABLE No. XV
TERMINATION OF ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY

Stages of Captivity	741 B.C.	721 B.C.	676 B.C.
Termination in lunar years	A.D. 1705	A.D. 1725	A.D. 1770
Termination in prophetic years	A.D. 1744	A.D. 1764	A.D. 1809
Termination in solar years	A.D. 1780	A.D. 1800	A.D. 1845

It will be seen that the Terminal Era in lunar years is from A.D. 1705 to 1770, and in solar years from A.D. 1780 to 1845. The earliest date of the termination is therefore 1705 and the latest 1845.

Between these two dates therefore we should expect to see the lifting of the heavy hand of Israel's age-long chastisement, and thenceforth a mighty change in the condition of the race. The latter-day blessings should have commenced, and the nation should be entering upon its foretold inheritance of extension, might, power and dominion.

This period is a very significant one. These dates stake out the rise of the British Empire, and the bursting forth of the Anglo-Saxon race into world dominion: in territory, in colonies, in commerce and wealth, in world politics, in sea power, in military invincibility and in world-wide religious propaganda. Is there not in all this cause for earnest reflection and thought? What does it all mean? Is it all mere casual happening or the working out of the divine

purpose ? When all is said and done this fact remains, that the great Covenant Promises are being literally fulfilled to the Anglo-Saxon race ! Promises made by Oath and Covenant *exclusively* to the chosen race of Abraham. And this, too, at the very time when Israel ought to enter upon their glorious inheritance.

TERMINATION OF JUDAH'S PUNISHMENT

The punishment of Judah was very different from that of Israel. These "two families which the Lord hath chosen" were scattered for their great sins. On Israel God had said He would have no "mercy," but that He would show mercy to Judah (Hos. i. 6 and 7). Hence it was that Judah was restored to the promised land after the seventy years in Babylon. Israel was "driven away," "devoured," but not so Judah (Jer. l. 17).

"Israel is a scattered sheep, the lions have driven him away : first the king of Assyria hath devoured him ; and last this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, hath broken his bones."

Israel were not only *scattered* sheep, but were *lost*. The term "lost" is peculiarly applicable to Israel in contrast to the Jews. In Isaiah xxvii. 13, R.V. margin, it is written "They shall come which were *lost* in Assyria." They were technically the lost sheep of the house of Israel, a point to be borne in mind when reading the New Testament. They were lost to the Jews, and are even so to this day. They were lost to history and to the world at large. They were lost when Christ came. They were not in the fold of the Mosaic Covenant. They had been "divorced" and cast off. But not so Judah. The Jews have never been lost. They have always been in evidence, and can be traced through all their existence to the present day. They were not lost when the Messiah came to the earth, but were still under the Mosaic Covenant, still in covenant with God, they were still within the fold and in the land.

Up to the time of Christ they had remained in the Father's house, even as the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal

Son ; while Israel like the younger son had gone into the far country, and was an outcast until he repented and turned back to God and was reconciled and received back by the Father under the New Covenant.

Up to the time of Christ, the Jews had been in the vineyard. They were as the second of the two sons who professed to do the Father's will, who had said "I go, Sir," but went not : Israel was like the other, who deliberately refused to serve, but who afterward repented and went ; and who to-day is doing the Father's will and work in the world.

Up to the time of Christ the Jews were in the fold, like the ninety and nine in the Parable of the Lost Sheep ; but Israel was like the one lost, after which the Good Shepherd went to seek. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," was His own word. He had since found it and brought it back and now it is in the fold of the New Covenant.

The return of the Jews to Palestine after the seventy years' sojourn in Babylon was necessary for the first coming of the Messiah, for it had been prophesied that He was to come out of Judah, of the house and lineage of David and be born in Bethlehem, etc. It was necessary for the coming of the ONE SEED, in and through whom all the great Abrahamic Covenant Promises were Yea and in Him Amen, and Who came to confirm or ratify all these promises.

But it will be remembered that ever since the carrying away to Babylon, the nation was in servitude to alien rule, being governed in turn by the three last world empires pre-figured in the great image in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. At the time of Christ they were in bondage to the Cæsars—notwithstanding the inexplicable boast made to Christ by the rulers of the Jews (John viii. 33).

The "Seven Times" chastisement of Judah had not run out at that time. It is in its Terminal Era to-day. When is it due to finish ? The table below shows the dates of the three stages of their carrying away and also the dates of the Terminal Era in lunar, prophetic and solar years.

TABLE No. XVI
TERMINATION OF JUDAH'S CAPTIVITY

Stages of Captivity	606-04 B.C.	598 B.C.	587 B.C.
Termination in lunar years	A.D. 1839	A.D. 1846	A.D. 1858-9
Termination in prophetic years	A.D. 1878-81	A.D. 1887	A.D. 1900
Termination in solar years	A.D. 1914-17	A.D. 1922	A.D. 1934

In this Table the punishment and captivity of Judah is made to end in 1934, which is manifestly wrong. What is the explanation?

The date 1934 is calculated from the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and not from the last carrying away of the last of the captives, which event took place some six or seven years later as is shown by Jeremiah. In Jeremiah lii, 30, the prophet states:

"In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred and forty and five persons."

It is from the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, which was about 579 B.C., that the count must be made. This brings the end to 1941.

Since the Great War movements are rapidly occurring in Jewry pointing to a nearing end. It is remarkable that the Zionists have lately expressed the opinion that 1941 will be the date of their final emancipation.

One great difference in the captivities of Israel and Judah should be borne in mind. It is that, while both were to be punished, Israel was to be divorced (Jer. iii. 8) and Judah was not. (See also Hosea i. 6-7; ii. 2). Israel was divorced from the (Mosaic) Covenant with God, but the Jews were not.

They have remained under this Old Covenant of the Law unto this present. As a people they have rejected the New Covenant, and so still abide under the Mosaic. They retain to-day the sign of it in the rite of circumcision. Israel went out of that Covenant and should be found an uncircumcised people.

The Prophets tell us that before Israel is to be restored to the occupation of the land promised to their Fathers they are to be called "the sons of the living God" (Hosea i. 10) : They are to be "betrothed" unto God for ever (Hosea ii. 19) : They are to be brought into "the bond of the Covenant" (Ezek. xx. 37). If all this means anything it is that Israel, before their restoration to Palestine, is to be nationally a Christian people. Naturally under the New Covenant in Christ Jesus they will not have the sign of the Old Covenant. Much confusion is caused by the reiteration of the expression "Israel is to be restored in unbelief." The people who use these words of course mean only the Jews. It is quite true that the Jews are to go back in unbelief and still under the Mosaic Covenant but it is not true of Israel. Israel must go back as a Christian and an uncircumcised people under the New Covenant. What is happening in our day ? As a result of the Great War Britain has come into occupation of the Land promised to the Fathers and is reinstating the Jews—and Britain does this as a Christian nation nationally under the New Covenant, while the Jews go back in unbelief. Who, according to the Scriptures, were to reinstate the Jews ? Israel and Israel alone. If the British be not Israel, how then comes it about that they are doing the very work that the unerring word of God tells us that Israel was to do ? (Isa. lx. 9).

"Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows ? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them."

Isaiah often mentions islands as the future abode of Israel. A careful study of the passages will show that they can refer to no other than the Isles of Tarshish, which are the British Isles. It is through the instrumentality of their ships that God's people will be taken back to their national home.

CHAPTER X
THE DREAM OF THE FIVE EMPIRES

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CHAPTER X

THE DREAM OF THE FIVE EMPIRES

DREAMS IN GENERAL

DREAMS are mysterious things. It is strange how differently they are regarded in various ages. In these modern days they are lightly esteemed, perhaps rightly so ; but it is noteworthy that of old, dreams and visions were regarded as of some importance, and that men dreamed at times to good purpose.

Whatever general view we may take of the subject this much is clear, that God did give dreams on special occasions, full of portent and teaching : and that He made use of this means for revealing His purposes to the sons of men, in the days before they had the full revelation which His written word gives.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

The Dream of the Five Empires is recorded in the second chapter of the book of Daniel. In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar, the mighty monarch of the Babylonian empire, "dreamed dreams wherewith his spirit was troubled." So much so that he was unable to sleep, or in Scripture words "his sleep brake from him." Things grew to such a pass that he summoned "the magicians and the astrologers, and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans for to show the king his dreams." The trouble was that he could not remember them. "The thing is gone from me," said he. And he made the unheard of demand that the wise men should tell him, not merely the interpretation, but the very dream itself ! In vain they expostulated and argued with the monarch on the unreasonableness of his request. It only made him "furious," and he was adamant in his decision that their failure to do this thing should be the death penalty.

Hence "the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain." Daniel and his companions seem to have been involved in this decree, for he himself interviewed the king and desired that he would give him time, and promised, if this were granted, to tell both the dream and also the interpretation. He and his companions then betook themselves to God in prayer. In answer to their supplications "the secret was revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." This wonderful dream was in fact dreamed over again by Daniel. It was a dream twice dreamed by two great men, and is unique for that fact alone. In due time Daniel stood before the king. He disclaimed any wisdom of his own in the matter and ascribed all the praise and glory to God. "There is a God in heaven," said he, "that revealeth secrets and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Not only was the revelation vouchsafed to Daniel by God, but the king's dream itself was God-given, with a definite object and mighty purpose, even to make known to this heathen ruler future events, "what shall be in the latter days." Prior to his dream the king, lying on his royal bed, had been looking into the future, wondering what the history of the world would be in the centuries to come. "What should come to pass hereafter," was the burden of the king's last thought ere he slumbered that memorable night. Daniel told the king that this dream was the God-given answer to his questioning thought, "He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass in the latter days." He then proceeded to tell the dream of "the great image whose brightness was excellent" as it had stood before the king, and the form of which was terrible and inspiring. It was composed of four parts: (1) Head; (2) Breast and Arms; (3) Belly and Thighs; (4) Legs and Feet. The first three were made of the metals Gold, Silver and Brass; and the fourth, the Legs of Iron, while the Feet were a mixture of Iron and Clay. It was an awe-inspiring sight, but the most marvellous part was yet to come, for the king had also seen "a Stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands which smote the image upon his feet which were of iron and clay, and brake them in

pieces." Thereupon the whole image collapsed. "Then was the iron and the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them." Whereas "the Stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

There was something mysterious about this Stone, for while the image was merely a man-made monument, a manufactured thing and easily understood, the Stone was mysterious in its origin. It was not hewn out by the hand of man, nor fashioned as the image was by human skill and handicraft. It was no humanly-devised structure. The scene was dramatic in the extreme. We can well understand that, though the dream could not be recalled, the effect of it on the king's mind was profound. No wonder that "his spirit was troubled and his sleep brake from him."

GOD'S INTERPRETATION

So much for the dream ; now follows the interpretation, fortunately for us not that of soothsayers, astrologers and sorcerers, who might be right or might be wrong, but that of God Himself. In a few strokes we have depicted in broad outline the whole future of the world to the end of time. What a condensation of history ! The tale of centuries compressed into minutes ! In regard to the past how marvelously accurate : In regard to the present developments how full of interest !

Nebuchadnezzar is told that he is the head of gold, this is definite and fixed. God revealed unmistakably that the Babylonian Empire was the first of the four represented by the image. Next there was to rise a second but inferior one, to be followed by yet another, "which shall bear rule over all the earth." Neither of these was named at the time by God, but history has shown us which they were, namely the Medo-Persian and the Grecian Empires. We know, too, from later visions given to Daniel that they were thus to be identified (Dan. viii. 20, 21).

The fourth world empire is stated to be particularly strong, "even as iron is strong and breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things." The continuation of this empire is represented as a mixture of strength and weakness, as having no cohesion, and as symbolized by the iron and miry clay, which composed the structure of the feet and toes. This kingdom was to be divided, it does not say into ten kingdoms, but into strength and weakness, or iron and potter's clay. Nowhere is Nebuchadnezzar informed that the ten toes represented ten kingdoms. But we know from a later vision, after the king's time, that the fourth empire was so to end. This empire is not once named in Scripture, but history has made it evident that it was the Roman Empire. No historian in so few words has ever given a portrayal of it to surpass in accuracy this far-off prophetic description.

The interpretation of the dream so far is clear, and there is no dispute as to the identity of these four great world powers. Strange to say, it is around the identity of the Fifth Empire that there is any divergence of opinion. The God-given interpretation needs, therefore, careful examination (Dan. ii. 44-45).

In the days of these kings
shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom,
which shall never be destroyed :
and the kingdom shall not be left to other people,
but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms
and it shall stand for ever.
For as much as thou sawest that
The Stone was cut out of the mountain without hands
and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver
and the gold ;
the great God hath made known to the king
what shall come to pass hereafter,
and the dream is certain
and the interpretation thereof sure.

God assures Nebuchadnezzar of the absolute certainty and sureness of this prophetic dream. We who live in these latter days may well marvel at its fulfilment. Most of it is past history, verified to the very letter, while the last portion of it is developing before our very eyes.

THE AGE OF THE DREAM'S FULFILMENT

The period of time in which this great world drama was to be enacted is clearly revealed by the words "the latter days" (Dan. ii. 28).

In Genesis xlix, 1, we have "the last days" mentioned as the period in which the great Abrahamic Covenant Promises were to be realized by the seed of ISRAEL. That period in which to Judah were to be fulfilled the Messianic and the Regal Promises, and to Joseph the Birthright Promises; the latter comprising multiplicity of seed, great colonial expansion, boundless wealth, and maritime supremacy.

In Numbers xxiv. 14 the time for the realization of the wonderful promises of Balaam's parables is given as "the latter days." Balaam, when called upon to curse Israel, was made by God to utter vast blessings upon the people.

Moses pronounced blessings upon the tribes of ISRAEL before his death. These were to come to pass in the same period, "the latter days."

Most Scripture students are agreed that this is the time before the Millennium; the time between the two advents of our blessed Lord; the days of the Gospel Dispensation; the days in which we live.

THE PURPOSE OF THE DREAM

What was the object of this Dream? It was to show the future history regarding the great world empires. Let us have the exact words before us. We noted that the musing of the king ere he slept on that notable night was "what should come to pass hereafter."

Verse 28: "God . . . maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

Verse 29: "He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass."

Verse 45: "The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter."

The purpose is clear and emphatic. It may seem strange that God should have made this momentous declaration of

future events to a foreign and heathen monarch, instead of revealing it to His people in Palestine by His servants the prophets. But note the publicity and fame that thereby was gained for this great prophecy throughout the then civilized world. It was no secret or private announcement. It was a prophetic statement to the world at large. It was an open challenge for all time to the peoples of earth to test and judge the faithfulness and power of the One True and Living God.

THE IDENTITY OF THE FIFTH EMPIRE

Spiritual or Temporal ?

As already stated opinion regarding the Fifth Empire is divided. It was universally held in past ages that it signified a purely Spiritual Realm: that it signified the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ, set up in the hearts of men, who believed in Him, and that it meant nothing else. In other words it was 'spiritualized' by all expositors. But in this last century there has arisen an ever-increasing volume of thought and recognition that perhaps after all it represented more than only a purely spiritual realm, and that it did mean an actual World Empire. These rival claims require earnest consideration. Both sides are agreed that it is "the Kingdom of God," or "the Kingdom of Christ." But one regards it as purely spiritual and the other as a literal kingdom.

Needless to say that it is impossible to conceive of a literal Kingdom of God that is purely earthly. The very fact that it is "of God" implies that spirituality is and must be a characteristic of such an earthly kingdom. The Kingdom of God must of necessity be more than mere material. The Kingdom of God does not consist of eating and drinking. It must have its spiritual side. It will be characterized by judgment and justice (Gen. xviii. 19). For

"The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17).

The outward and visible must embody the inward and spiritual. It must be different from all other kingdoms of

this world. In this sense it cannot be reckoned among the kingdoms or nations of earth. It must stand separate and alone, for there can be none else like it.

When our Lord came to earth the people were so obsessed with the thought of a material kingdom and a reigning Messiah that they failed to recognize the spiritual side. To-day we are so entirely and absolutely engrossed with the latter that we run the risk of thinking that it alone comprises the whole counsel of God, and hopelessly miss the clear revelation of the dual nature of the Kingdom of God.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

In olden time the Kingdom of God on this earth was ISRAEL, set up as His kingdom at Sinai. God spoke of it as "*My kingdom*" (1 Chron. xvii. 14). It was no merely spiritual realm. Again we have the expression, "*the kingdom of the Lord*," meaning the literal kingdom of Israel, 2 Chron. xiii. 8. David speaks of that kingdom as "the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over ISRAEL" (1 Chron. xxviii. 5).

The literalists, as we may call them, hold that all through the Scriptures, God had one continuous and ultimate plan of ruling the world through His Chosen People ISRAEL, and that the Kingdom of ISRAEL was, and is, and ever will be, the Kingdom of God on this earth.

It may be recalled that in the days of Samuel when the Tribes demanded a king to reign over them, God said to Samuel that His people had rejected Him from being King over them. He was their King, and they alone were His kingdom on earth. There can be no question about this.

OPINION OF THE EARLY CHURCH

It is easy to understand that in the early days of Christianity the Fathers and Commentators could see no explanation of the Stone Kingdom. The Fifth Empire was an enigma to them. They got out of the difficulty by concluding that it could only have a spiritual interpretation and meaning. They could only solve the riddle by spiritualizing

it. They lived in the times of the Fourth or Roman Empire, and as they looked into the future they saw no sign or suggestion of the risk or coming of any other world-wide dominion. The old Kingdom of Israel "was not," just in the same way as Jacob said of its long-lost progenitor, "Joseph is not." The kingdom of Israel had long ceased to be reckoned among the nations. The early Fathers saw that the scattered and persecuted House of Judah, the Jews, did not fit the scheme: yea, had not our Lord said that the Kingdom of God would be taken away from them? They could not conceive the rise of any world empire that was to eclipse Rome in glory, power and extent. Hence they relegated this Stone Kingdom to the purely spiritual sphere. It was, they said, the Spiritual Kingdom of God set up in the hearts of believers of every nation, kindred and peoples. They perhaps had some excuse for holding such a view, for there was nothing in sight to aid faith in a literal fulfilment of this part of the prophetic dream. So it has come to pass that the Christian Church of succeeding generations has held to the old interpretation, and that too in spite of the startling developments and world changes of these later times. There is surely no excuse for Christians of the present day to ignore facts and the marvellous changes of our times?

ANALYSIS OF THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STONE KINGDOM

Let the prophetic description of the Stone Kingdom be closely examined in detail:

"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed."

Do these words indicate any suspicion of a spiritual realm? There is no hint, much less proof, that it is such. God's spiritual realm existed from the very beginning. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should set up a never-to-be-destroyed kingdom upon earth? Because all these four world powers, like those that preceded them, have risen, waxed and waned, are we to say God will not or cannot establish a perpetual one? Did not Jehovah make an unconditional Covenant with David that his

kingdom was to be for ever? Note the words of that promise (2 Sam. vii. 16) :

"And thine house and thy kingdom shall be *established for ever* before thee and thy throne shall be *established for ever*."

If it indeed be a purely Spiritual Kingdom when was it set up? If after our Lord came to earth, then surely it must be identical with the setting up of Christianity. But observe the opening words of our sentence, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Now Christianity began, of course, in the days of the Fourth or Roman Empire, which hardly meets the demands of the text. It cannot be said that it was set up "in the days of these kings," in the days of Babylonian or Medo-Persian or Grecian Empires. It cannot, therefore, refer to the setting up of Christianity. Is not such interpretation, therefore, ruled out of court? The words "in the days of these kings" are the God-given interpretation: they seem to be rather emphasized by the fact that in the vision itself there is no indication at what time the Stone Kingdom appeared upon the scene. From the dream alone it might have been thought that the Stone made its appearance after the image had been fully set up—but this interpretation corrects any such idea, and definitely states that it was in existence "in the days of these kings."

Some hold that "these kings" refer to the kings symbolized by the Ten Toes. But this will not hold, since Christianity was set up some four hundred years prior to the existence of the Ten kingdoms. It was set up in the time of the Roman Empire itself, which came to an end in A.D. 476, and then broke up into the Ten Toes kingdoms. Let it be noted that there is no statement made to Nebuchadnezzar that the Ten Toes were to represent ten kings or kingdoms. He never learned that fact. In this chapter of Daniel there is no more warrant for saying that the Ten Toes represent ten kingdoms than for saying that the ten fingers of the hands represented ten kingdoms. The meaning of the Ten Toes was only revealed to Daniel in a subsequent vision and after the death of this king. The words "in the days of these kings" refer

to the only kings mentioned in the vision, namely the Four Empires.

The spiritualizing interpretation of the Stone is difficult. Do not the words on the other hand fit easily and naturally with a literal kingdom ?

What was the position of Abraham's seed at this time ? The kingdom of Israel had years before been carried into Assyria, and the main portion of these captives had passed out of Asia into Europe, to the land of Ar-Sareth. The kingdom of Judah had already begun to fall under the heavy hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold ; and the throne and dynasty of David were passing away from Judah. At such a moment came this statement, "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Thus in the darkest hour in the history of Israel and Judah we are confronted with remarkable and astonishing statements, both by Jeremiah and by Daniel, of an enduring and literal kingdom to be set up. If God be the true and living God, His word must have been literally fulfilled. The further investigation of the setting up of this kingdom carries us beyond the pages of the Bible and involves the study of most remarkable legends and traditions connected with the Princess Royal of Judah in the Appointed Place. But all this is beyond the scope of this book.

To continue, take the next clause of the interpretation :

"And the kingdom shall not be left to other people."

It is difficult to see how this can apply to a spiritual Kingdom. How can a Spiritual Kingdom "not be left to other people" seeing that it is made up of people of every race and nation ? All the peoples of earth may be members of it by faith in Christ Jesus. The words are meaningless in such an application. Whereas they are natural and fitting as used of a material realm. They simply mean that the dominion of God's chosen race, Israel, is not to be taken away from them and given to any other people so as to make yet another and Sixth world dominion. The Fifth Empire of Israel was to be the final one of this earth.

"But it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms."

Here again the literal does meet all the requirements of the words, while a spiritual interpretation is rather forced. From other Scriptures we learn that Israel is to be supreme over all the earth and overthrow all that will not submit. A kingdom of spirit does not break kingdoms in pieces and destroy them. The description given here is in exact keeping with other prophecies concerning this race (*vide* Num. xxiii. 24 ; Num. xxiv. 8-9 ; Deut. xxxiii. 17 ; Isa. liv. 15-17 ; Isa. lx. 12 ; Jer. li. 20-23). This Stone Kingdom was to "fill the whole earth" and Israel was the only nation which was by the promise of God to spread abroad into all the world.

"And it shall be for ever."

The perpetuity of the kingdom is restated. Israel is the one nation to which God promised continuance as long as the world lasts (Jer. xxxiii. 23-26). We have already noted that it "shall never be destroyed" ; and also that David's kingdom and throne "shall be established for ever" (2 Sam. vii. 16).

We now come to the words which seem most strongly to support the purely spiritual theory.

"Forasmuch as thou sawest that the Stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter."

The expression "cut out . . . without hands" is considered to warrant this conclusion, and that of necessity it must be a spiritual dominion. But does it ? Would it not more reasonably apply to God's Elect Race ? Could there be a better and truer description of His people Israel ? Was not Israel the divinely chosen, the elect people of God ? God Himself spake of Israel as his "severed" people, "severed you from other people," which is the same thing as "cut out of the mountain without hands." See Lev. xx. 26 :

"And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine."

Compare 1 Kings viii. 53 :

"For Thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be Thine inheritance, as Thou spakest by the hand of Moses."

Was it not God-appointed, God-made, causing it thus to differ from all other world powers? Was it not alone instituted to carry out God's great purposes of blessing to the whole human race? Was it not to be the New Covenant people, a great Christian and christianizing power?

Nebuchadnezzar's Conception of the Stone

As Nebuchadnezzar heard this wonderful interpretation of his dream, what sort of kingdom was he meant and led to understand? Would he not take it at its obvious face meaning? And was not God instructing him? It may be urged that the king's conception of what God was telling him did not matter, that he may well have misunderstood and failed to grasp the true nature of the Stone Kingdom and that it would be only natural for him to conclude that this greatest was but another kingdom like the others, save for its mysterious origin. Nevertheless it was thus that He that revealeth secrets instructed him.

Daniel's Conception of the Stone Kingdom

How would Daniel understand this Stone Kingdom? Would he take it to be a Spiritual one? Could he conceive it to be anything but the literal kingdom of Israel? He knew that God had no other kingdom on earth. He knew the glorious promises concerning the future greatness of Israel.

The Stone an Emblem

"The Stone of Israel"

People fail to recognize that Stone was an emblem of Israel. The recognition of this fact throws much light on many passages of Scripture. What was this "Stone cut out without hands" but "the Stone of Israel" mentioned by Jacob, when he bestowed upon Joseph in the presence of all his brethren the great Birthright? Note the mysterious words in Genesis xlix. 24:

"From thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel."

These words are somewhat obscure, but the fact stands out that the Stone symbolizes Israel. Therefore, in this

present revelation of God to Nebuchadnezzar, what more natural or more appropriate than that the Almighty should represent the world dominion of Israel by the Stone? The Stone of the vision must surely be the Stone of Israel. Scripture is consistent throughout in its symbolism.

Some scholars consider that the better rendering of Jacob's words is "from thence is the shepherding of the Stone of Israel," or as another century-old translation has it, "From that time he, Joseph, kept the Stone of Israel."

When Jacob bestowed the Birthright on Joseph, he therewith handed over to him the custody of "the Stone of Israel," which was the seal, witness, token, emblem and symbol of the Covenant at Bethel; even the memorial Stone whereon the patriarch had laid his head on that memorable night when God appeared to him and confirmed to him the stupendous Abrahamic Covenant; the very Stone which he consecrated and anointed with oil, and set up for a witness, and which he solemnly vowed should be "God's House" (Gen. xxviii. 10-22). That "Stone of Israel" was the title-deed of the Birthright, the title-deed of the heirship of the world, the Stone of Destiny.

This Stone is also the type of our Blessed Lord, Who is the Spiritual King of the Stone Kingdom of Israel. At His second coming to earth He is not going to set up a new kingdom, but He is to receive and take over the kingdom that already exists, even the kingdom that was set up "in the days of these kings" by Jehovah as an unending kingdom. Luke xix. 11-27 certainly gives one the idea that our Lord will find the kingdom awaiting Him when He returns.

When the angel Gabriel announced to the blessed Virgin Mary the birth of the Messiah his words were:

"And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33).

What was "the throne of David" but "the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel"? How many everlasting kingdoms has God? The kingdom of Israel was to be for ever, and so was the Stone Kingdom of this dream and so is the kingdom that has been given to the Son of God: they

are of course all one and the same. Christ did not assume and reign over the kingdom at His first coming : that was not the age of the reigning Messiah : He Himself declared to Pilate that He was a King, but "My Kingdom is not of this world," that is, not of this world's pattern or origin. At His second coming He will actually be the visible King reigning over the united houses of Israel and Judah and reign through the millennial age. In that day the Stone Kingdom will have come to its zenith. The argument for a literal as against a spiritualizing interpretation of the Stone Kingdom seems overwhelming.

Christ's Parables of the Stone

Bearing in mind the symbolism of the "Stone," attention should be called to the parables of our Lord and Master on this topic as recorded in Matthew xxi. They have a direct bearing on our subject, and are found in the fourfold section of verses 33 to 44.

1. In verses 33 to 41 we have the story of the Vineyard which was taken away from the wicked husbandmen, who killed the heir, and given to "other husbandmen," who were to render the fruits in their seasons.

2. In verse 42. The stone which the builders rejected becoming the headstone of the corner.

3. In verse 43. The kingdom of God taken from the Jews and given to "a nation" bringing forth the fruits thereof.

4. In verse 44 that whosoever fell on this stone should be broken, but on whomsoever it should fall it would grind him to powder (or R.V. scatter him as dust).

The unity of these passages is very strikingly brought out in "The Twentieth-Century New Testament" version, and in Dr. Weymouth's "The New Testament in Modern Speech."

It is universally admitted that *the wicked husbandmen* (1) in the parable from whom the vineyard was to be taken are *the Jews* (3) from whom the Kingdom of God was to be taken :

That the Vineyard and the Kingdom of God are one and the same.

That the "*other husbandmen*," to whom the vineyard is to be given, are identical with the one *nation*, to whom the Kingdom of God is to be given.

The Stone of section (2) is of course the same as the Stone of section (4).

The connection between the one single "*nation*" of section 3 and the Stone of section 4 seems evident.

Who are these "*other husbandmen*"? They are the nation which is to have the Kingdom of God or the Vineyard, they are the Stone which is to fall victoriously upon its enemies, exactly as the Stone Kingdom of this dream was to do. Who can they be but the other House of the seed of Israel? The identity is complete. The burden of the prophets was that Israel of the Assyrian captivity, when pardoned, recovenanted, rebetrothed and restored, should do these very works. This vineyard was not to be given to all and sundry, to any and every people, but to the one predestined nation. The reference is strictly to Israel.

The rejected Stone was truly a type of the rejected Son of God, but it was also the type of His elect people Israel. They had been rejected, divorced and uncovenanted at the time of their Assyrian captivity in a way that the House of Judah had never been. What Christ says here of the later glory of this rejected Stone is the Divine endorsement and seal of the constant assertions of the prophets concerning the restoration and exaltation of Israel. When our Lord uttered the words "Whosoever shall fall upon this Stone shall be broken but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder," He was most emphatically confirming the promises made to the Fathers concerning their seed in the latter days, an endorsement of the many prophetic assertions concerning the invincible and triumphant progress of Israel over every foe. It was not concerning a spiritual Israel that He spoke here, but of the literal seed; He meant that whatsoever power attacked the Stone Kingdom should be broken, and whoever that Kingdom attacks it would utterly break in pieces.

As the image of the four Empires stood in the dream, we realize the difficulty that existed of showing the sequence of time and events under that symbol. In the Image all the

four Empires were present at one and the same time, which, of course, was not the case in history. Thus the Empire of the head of Gold was not existent in the period of that of the chest and arms of Silver. When the Medo-Persian Empire came on the scene, it had completely swallowed up the Babylonian Empire. The same applies to each of the subsequent ones. Each succeeding Empire entirely absorbed and replaced the preceding one. So that when the Stone "smote the Image upon his feet" there was in existence no Babylonian, Medo-Persian or Grecian Empires, nor was the Roman Empire in its single integrity in existence. Only the Feet with the Ten Toes were on the scene when this conquering work of the Stone Kingdom commenced. The Stone Kingdom which was contemporaneous with the four empires became aggressive only in the Ten Toes stage. The Stone which existed in "the former days" did not become active as a power till "the latter days." What then are we to expect the Stone Kingdom, the Kingdom of God on earth, Israel, to do? It was to fall upon the Ten Toes, the terminal stage of the Image. When they were conquered and broken, then were the preceding empires, of which they were the existing representatives, done away and destroyed.

And yet as we read the story it does seem as if the Stone had an influence in the destruction of each of the four World Empires, as though Israel must have had a hand in the downfall of each one in turn.

ATTEMPTS TO GAIN WORLD SUPREMACY

The Roman Empire ceased to exist in the fifth century after Christ, A.D. 476, and since then there have been more or less ten kingdoms representing the ten toes. Some speak as if these are to be yet a future development, but that cannot be, as it would leave a gap of many centuries between the fall of the Roman Empire and the appearance of the ten kingdoms. These Ten kingdoms have had various experiences and many changes. Since the day that the world sceptre fell from the hand of Rome, one or other kingdom as it grew in power has endeavoured to seize the sceptre of world power and sway the earth.

There have been in the main three such great attempts. In the sixteenth century the power of Spain grew apace, and she bade fair to assume the hegemony of the world. Her power was great and her colonial possessions were vast. The ambitious Philip in the days of Queen Elizabeth tried to grasp the dominion, but there stood in his path, obstructing his way, the British nation. If he was ever to sway the world, Britain must be first crushed. Great was the effort he put forth to accomplish his cherished purpose. Humanly speaking we ought to have been conquered and crushed. Great was the peril of this nation when the mighty Armada set sail. But through the intervention and help of God Spain was defeated and overthrown. Never since that day has Spain aspired to world supremacy.

The second great attempt was that of the French in the days of Napoleon. This ambitious monarch made a great effort to seize the world sceptre. But, as in the case of Spain, so here again the way was barred by this same Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Napoleon conquered kingdoms on all sides of the Continent, but until he had first destroyed Britain he could not realize his world ambition. Britain must be crushed and swept aside. This he well understood and undertook to accomplish. The peril to this country was very real and great in the extreme. The French hosts were ready for the invasion of these shores. They only awaited the arrival of the great fleet of French and Spanish ships to act as convoy to the transports. In this land the hearts of men were failing them for fear of the things that were coming. Humanly speaking we ought to have been invaded and crushed. But God once more gave us deliverance, through Nelson's great victory over the French fleet at Trafalgar, whereby the danger of invasion was removed, though the enemy's power was not yet broken. It was, however, finally destroyed a few years later at Waterloo, where again God crowned our efforts with success, and frustrated for ever the ambition of France to rule the world.

Yet once again there has arisen another ambitious ruler, the Kaiser, Wilhelm II of Germany, bent on grasping the sceptre of world dominion. The pathway of this aspirant

was blocked by the selfsame Anglo-Saxon race. If Germany was to rule the world Britain must be crushed and removed. This the Germans well understood, and proclaimed the fact that Britain was their one and only real enemy. Unprepared as we were for war, our peril was exceedingly great. Humanly speaking we ought to have been overwhelmed and broken. But once more God gave us deliverance and victory, and the mightiest military power that the world had ever known fell in pieces, and this, under God, was due to the direct effort of the Anglo-Saxon race, the British Empire and the United States of America.

THE PRESENT WORLD POSITION

What is the present world position? There exists in these days a very mighty and growing World Empire, the greatest that has ever existed on this earth, the British Empire of the Anglo-Saxon race. This race consists of this Empire and the United States. They are the two pre-eminently Christian and christianizing powers of the world. The British Empire consists of the British Isles and her great Dominions. It is in fact "a Commonwealth of Nations." Besides the mother country there are the great self governing Dominions :

The Dominion of Canada.

The Commonwealth of Australia.

The Dominion of New Zealand.

The Union of South Africa.

Let it be remembered that among the great Covenant Promises made by God unto the Fathers was one that their seed should become "a Nation and a Company of Nations" (Gen. xxxv. 11), and also that the seed should "spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south (Gen. xxviii. 14).

The phenomenal expansion of the British Empire commenced at the end of the eighteenth century—a period that witnessed the beginnings of its world power, its multitudinousness, its command of the sea, its commercial greatness and prodigious wealth, and its world-wide religious propa-

ganda. This epoch we noted in a preceding chapter corresponds with the termination of the Seven Times punishment of the House of Israel : a very remarkable and noteworthy fact.

In addition to these great self-governing Dominions Britain, before the Great War, ruled over the vast Empire of India, held territories farther east, as the Strait Settlements and the Federated Malay States. It possessed the ancient empire of Egypt and the Sudan, also other large countries in Africa, such as Somaliland, British East Africa, Uganda, Nyassaland, Bechuanaland, Rhodesia, Nigeria, etc.

Since the War the increase of territory has been simply amazing. Palestine and Mesopotamia in Asia, while in Africa most of the vast colonies of Germany have come into Britain's possession, and in the Pacific many islands have fallen to her lot. Egypt and Iraq (Mesopotamia) have received their independence, and are in alliance with Britain, and under her protection.

A mighty and impelling force or destiny seems to urge on this increase of dominion. Territories and possessions seem to fall to its lot, at all times against the desires of its Government.

The evidence given before Parliament in 1832 is interesting on this point. "The rise and progress of our power in India have been rapid and marvellous. Unlike other empires, ours has been, in a great degree, forced upon us ; built up at almost every step against our own deliberate resolution to avoid it ; in the face, I may say, of every opposition which could be given to it by the Legislature, His Majesty's Government, and by the Court of Directors. Every successive Governor-General sent from this country, including Lord Cornwallis, who went to India under the Act containing the well-known denunciation against conquest and extension of dominion—Lord Wellesley, Lord Minto, Lord Hastings, Lord Amherst, have seen reason to enter into wars and negotiations, defensive in their objects, but generally terminating in that very extension of territory and dominance which was dreaded."

Our Empire does certainly differ from all others in this respect. It has not been created by ordinary human plans. Higher hands hold and guide its growth and destiny. It has indeed been cut out without hands.

The *Daily Telegraph* of April 3, 1915, gives extracts from an article by the German Professor Karl Muth from the Munich periodical *Suddeutsche Monatshefte*, in which he quotes a letter by the Polish author Vincenty Luboslawski, who writes : "There is no longer any world dominion among the human race. The Germans least of all are fitted to rule other peoples, for they never understand them. They have never won the affection of the Poles or Herreros, and the unanimity with which all the inhabitants of the British Empire have taken up arms would have been impossible in a German-ruled Empire. *A World Empire such as the British is a work of God.* Treitschke and his pupils imagined a German Empire would be created with weapons, lies and violence. That is quite impossible. *The British Empire was not created by human plans.* It will only dissolve when every section of it is ripe for independence. *But no other nation on earth can destroy the British Empire, for it is necessary for the defence of liberty in the world.* The Germans, who have no political liberty at home, and allowed themselves to be ruled by the Prussians, are incapable of becoming masters of the world. Heine was bitterly just when he said of the Germans : 'We call that country our Fatherland which hereditarily belongs to our princes.' So slavish a nation as the German cannot long rule over others. It must be mastered and educated up to liberty. The victory of the West European Allies is absolutely assured. *Great Britain has already tamed two would-be rulers of the world, Philip the second and Napoleon.* Only ignorance of Great Britain could have led to hopes that a second-rate actor such as William could achieve what Napoleon failed to achieve. You Germans are furious at the participation of Asiatics and Africans in this war, *yet this is the best possible testimony to the noble administrative methods of the British.* The Hindus and Moroccans fight voluntarily for Western civilization and freedom, because they understand the cause they are

fighting for. Bavaria lets herself be killed for Prussians' world hegemony, without realizing what value to her and to the world such a hegemony would be. Ethically therefore the savage Moroccans stand higher in this war than the betrayed Bavarians and Austrians."

This late war brought vast accessions to the British domains, and that too in spite of the fact that the Empire entered into the war with no desire for territory or self-aggrandizement. Wherever British rule has spread it has brought peace and justice for the peoples who have come under its sway. It has brought the blessings of the Gospel to the benighted inhabitants, and righteous rule has displaced the horrors and cruel abominations of tyranny. In this respect, in spite of its many national imperfections and sins, and notwithstanding its inveterate habit of self-depreciation, this nation is bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in the earth. Under the signal blessing and favour of God this Empire is steadily growing in power and extent. A mighty World Empire has indeed come upon the scene which eclipses in size and greatness any of the four preceding empires. The early Christians may have had some excuse for spiritualizing the Stone Kingdom of this Dream, but there is none to-day for ignoring facts and denying the literal fulfilment of God's word. There is now no need for spiritualizing since the actual exists. No one will deny that from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the present there have been only Five real World Empires, and the Dream tells of *five*. Is not the Fifth in History the Fifth in the Dream?

A Pertinent Question

A pertinent question may be asked: If the Fifth Empire of History be not the Fifth Empire of the Dream, why did not God show the king this Historic Fifth? The whole purpose of God was to make known to the king "what shall be in the latter days." Why then did He omit to show him the greatest of them all, and one that exists in these latter days?

The Stone Kingdom is the Kingdom of God:

a literal and visible Kingdom.
the Kingdom of Israel.
the Fifth World Empire.
the British Empire.

Victor Hugo on Britain

The remarkable words of Victor Hugo, the great French writer, are worthy of attention: "Over that sea, in calm majesty, lies the proud Island whose existence consoles me for a thousand Continental crimes, and vindicates for me the goodness of Providence. Yes, yes, proud Britain, thou art justly proud of thy colossal strength—more justly of thy God-like repose. Stretched upon the rock, but not like Prometheus, and with no evil bird to rend thy side, rests the genius of Britain. He waits his hour, but counts not the hours between. He knows that it is rolling up through the mystic gloom of ages, and that its chariot is guided by the iron hand of destiny. Dare I murmur that the mists will clear for me? that I shall hear the rumbling wheels of the chariot of the hour of Britain? It will come. It is coming. It has come. The whole world, aroused as if by some mighty galvanism, suddenly raises a wild cry of love and admiration, and throws itself into the bounteous bosom of Britain. Henceforth there are no nations, no peoples—but one and indivisible will be the world, and the world will be one Britain. Her virtues and her patience have triumphed. The lamp of her faith, kindled at the Apostolic altars, burns as a beacon to mankind. Her example has regenerated the erring, her mildness has rebuked the rebellious, and her gentleness has enchanted the good. Her type and her temple shall be the Mecca and Jerusalem of a renewed universe."

How better could this great seer have described the Israel of God? His words are but the echo of the prophecies of Israel's world destiny.

CONCLUSION

If these things be indeed as here set forth, what should be the effect on us? What should be our attitude and

response ? Dare we despise our Birthright and say, "What shall this Birthright do to me ?" Should we not rather be filled with holy awe at the sense of our high calling and destiny ? Should we not strive to make our calling and election sure ? Here is no place for foolish pride or self-satisfaction, since it is for no righteousness or merit of ours that God has so highly exalted our race and placed such favour upon us, but because He is the Covenant-keeping Jehovah. "Because He loved thy fathers therefore He set His love upon you." What a clarion call this is to repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. For apart from Christ it shall profit us nothing if we gain the whole world and lose our own soul ; the Kingdom of God is not mere meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. What a call to consecration to Jehovah's high purpose in the service and blessing of the whole human race. May our blessed Lord see of the travail of His soul in us, the individual and the nation, and be satisfied. The day is hastening on when He shall come, Whose right it is to reign on this earth and wield the Sceptre of the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel, even the Stone Kingdom.

CHAPTER XI
THE LATTER DAYS

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THE LATTER DAYS.

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CHAPTER XI

THE LATTER DAYS

THIS expression occurs frequently in Scripture. It may be found as "the latter days," "the last days," "the latter time," or "the last times."

When do they commence ? When do they terminate ? Do they run into, and form, part of the Millennial age ? A study of the subject suggests the following answers :

They began at Christ's First Coming.

They end with His Second Coming.

They precede the Millennium.

They are the days of the Gospel Dispensation.

Time in Scripture is divided into three main portions—(1) The Former Days ; (2) The Latter Days ; (3) The Millennium. The ages up to the First Advent were the Former Days ; those after it up to the Second Advent are the Latter Days ; those after the return of Christ to this earth will be the Millennium.

From the days of Abraham to the First Advent there were twenty centuries : from the Advent to the present time are about twenty centuries. We are as far removed from the birth and cross of Christ on this side as Abraham was on the other side. The Cross was the very centre of these long ages, even as it is the central point of world history. It certainly inaugurated a new age or new dispensation which was the latter days. It was the dividing point between the former and the latter days.

The latter days then are those of the Gospel or Christian Dispensation.

Jewish commentators hold that the expression "the latter days" always means "the days of the Messiah."

Are these contentions upheld by Scripture ?

1. The days of our Lord were certainly the latter days, as will be seen from Hebrews i. 1, 2 :

"God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in *time past* unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these *last days* spoken unto us by His Son."

Here we have "time past" and "last days"—a division into former days and latter days—showing that the "former days" were before Christ, and the last or latter days were after His advent. This much is evident, that, if His coming did not actually inaugurate the latter days, it took place in the latter days : clear also that the period of the Fathers, that of the prophets, was the former days. It seems reasonable to hold that "by the prophets" must be taken to indicate the time up to the end of Malachi—that the time of the prophets was not in the latter days. This is borne out by Jeremiah, who spoke of the latter days as a future age (Jer. xxx. 24) :

"*In the latter days* ye shall consider it."

2. St. Peter speaks of our Lord as having been manifested in the latter days (1 Pet. i. 20) :

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in *these last times* for you."

Here again it is evident that, if Christ's coming did not initiate the latter days, it took place in that time. The words "these last times" are translated in the Twentieth-Century New Testament as "these last days."

3. St. John tells us that the times of the Apostles were in the latter days (1 John ii. 18) :

"Little children, it is *the last time* : and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists ; whereby we know that it is *the last time*."

The Twentieth-Century New Testament translates this "last time" as the "last days." It is evident that this period could not possibly be before the days of the Christ, otherwise there could be no "antichrist." The evidence seems to point to the suggestion that the coming of our Lord began the latter days.

4. On the day of Pentecost Peter told his hearers that they were in the last days, that the prediction of Joel was being fulfilled in the time appointed (Acts ii. 16-17) :

"But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel ; And it shall come to pass in *the last days*, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh," etc.

It is obvious that the prophet Joel did not live in "the last days," since he spoke of them as in the future.

5. The days of the Christian faith are spoken of as the latter days by St. Paul in both his epistles to Timothy :

1 Tim. iv. 1 : "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in *the latter times* some shall depart from the faith. . . ."

2 Tim. iii. 1 : "This know also, that in *the last days* perilous times shall come."

These verses do not depict conditions in Millennial times.

6. The same is the teaching of St. Jude (verses 17, 18) :

"But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ ; how that they told you there should be mockers in *the last time* . . ."

This is clearly pre-Millennial ; it is no description of Christ's reign.

There is a verse that bears on our subject in Isaiah ix. 1-2, where in the R.V. the distinction between "the former time" and "the latter time" is strikingly brought out :

"But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In *the former time* He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in *the latter time* hath He made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light ; and they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

This verse refers to the first invasion and deportation of Israel by Assyria. This fixes for us the fact that "the former time" (or the former days) was running in 741 B.C., and clearly shows that "the latter days" came after the captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel. Further it tells of our Lord's ministry in Galilee, which is stated to be in the later time (or the latter days), corroborating the above verses

on the point. The coming of the "great light" was in, if it did not actually initiate, the latter days.

Thus far, then, the indications seem to be that the latter days began with the Birth of the Messiah and included the Christian Dispensation. We have seen that 741 B.C. was in "the former days," and further that the prophets spoke in "the former days," and the date of Malachi brings us down to at least 397 B.C., the close of the Old Testament canon.

Thus we have brought these two periods towards each other to the fixed dates 397 B.C. and A.D. 1. So far we find no indication that "the latter days" began before the coming of Our Lord.

Now no epoch-making event took place in the history of God's people in the 400 years between Malachi and Our Lord : but a supreme event, changing all history, did take place in the coming of our Lord ; therefore the great change from the former to the latter times must have taken place then.

St. Paul is constantly emphasizing the new era brought in by the manifestation of the Son of God. In Acts xvii., in his Mars Hill speech, having stated that "God hath determined the times before appointed," said in verse 30 :

"And the *times of this ignorance* God winked at ; *but now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

Here the ages are divided by the coming of the Lord into (a) "The times of this ignorance" and (b) "but now" (and obviously "henceforth" included). The "times of this ignorance" correspond to the former days and the "now" to the days of the Messiah, which are the latter days. The coming of Christ ended the times of ignorance.

Again in Acts xiv. when Paul had cured the impotent man at Lystra, he scarce restrained the people from sacrificing to him and Barnabas in these words (verses 15, 16) :

"Sirs, why do ye these things ? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should (*now*) turn from *these* vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein : Who *in times past* suffered all nations to walk in their own ways . . ."

Obviously the expression "times past" here includes the time up to the coming of Christ, and correspond with the former days, which were ended by His advent.

St. Peter likewise makes the conclusion of "time past" to correspond with the coming of the Redeemer. He wrote to "the elect" (1 Pet. i. 2), and speaking of them says in ii. 10 :

"which *in time past* were not a people, but are *now* the people of God : which had not obtained mercy, but *now* have obtained mercy. . . ."

The reference is solely to Hosea i. 6-9, to the people Lo-ruhamah, Lo-ammi, who were none other but the Ten-Tribed Kingdom of Israel. The Apostle divides the ages into "time past" and "now." The "now" refers to the times of mercy through the coming of Christ, while the days before the Redemption refer to "time past" : the former days.

There seems no room, therefore, to doubt that the first advent of our Blessed Lord ended the former days and inaugurated "the latter days."

THE TERMINATION OF "THE LATTER DAYS"

Have we anything to determine the ending of "the latter days" ? What is the last event that is to take place in that period ? There were very many great and exceeding precious promises that were or are to be realized in that age ; but what is the latest incident that Scripture gives as occurring in it ?

There seems to be nothing later than the great invasion of restored ISRAEL in the Holy Land by the armed hosts of Gog and his confederates as recorded in Ezekiel xxxviii. where in verse 16 the time is given us :

"And thou shalt come up against My people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land : and it shall be *in the latter days*, and I will bring thee against My land, that the heathen may know Me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes."

The same date is also mentioned in the eighth verse of this chapter as "*in the latter years.*"



This terrible invasion is brought to end by the direct intervention of the God of ISRAEL. The prophet Zechariah gives this detail,

"Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives" (Zech. xiv. 3-4).

This is believed to be the return of the Son of God, His Second Coming as the reigning Messiah of His people ; and thence forth "the Lord shall be King over all the earth." He will destroy the enemy, deliver His people, and take His Kingdom. To Him is then given the throne of His father David and He begins His glorious millennial reign of Peace.

Armageddon is the last event that we find as taking place in the latter days. We may, therefore, take it that "The Latter Days" strictly denote the period between the First and Second Advents of our Lord and Saviour.

If this be correct, the following Table No. XVIII gives the position of these eras at a glance:

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> First Advent. ↓  ← B.C. A.D. → </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> Second Advent. ↓  </div> </div>		
Former Days. O. T. Dispensation.	Latter Days. Christian Dispensation.	Millennium. Christ's Reign.
	Fulfilment of { The Abrahamic Covenant. The Blessings of Moses. The Parables of Balaam. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.	

The Millennium is the consummation of the Blessings of the Latter Days.

We recall the facts that :

1. The great Abrahamic Covenant Promises :
2. The Prophetic Parables of Balaam concerning Israel :
3. The Blessings uttered by Moses on Israel :


4. The Fifth World Empire, the Stone Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream,

were all destined to be fulfilled in "the latter days."

There are some who relegate these great blessings to the time of the Millennium, implying that "the latter days" continue through that thousand years. There appears little ground for such a contention. The blessings above referred to are almost all associated with fighting and struggle ; Joseph's being shot at by archers and his hands being made strong for resistance and conquest ; Israel's eating up the nations and pushing the peoples together ; the destruction of the image. Now we know that in the millennial reign there is to be no fighting or warfare ; that there is to be no oppression, no encroachment. It seems inconceivable, for these reasons alone, that the Blessings foretold for the latter days could take place in the Millennium of Peace. In the Millennium, Israel will be supreme and the heir of the world ; there will be nothing more to conquer, swords and spears will have been converted into ploughshares and pruning-hooks.

TABLE XIX.

COVENANTS . ADVENTS . DISPENSATIONS

Abrahamic Covenant	400 Years	Mosaic Covenant The "First" The "Old"	+	The New Covenant		The Millennium
The Former Days B.C. The Old Testament Dispensation				The Latter Days A.D. Christian Dispensation		
			The First Advent			
						Christ King

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